











P O E M S



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# POEMS

BY

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*THE*  
*STORY OF JUSTIN MARTYR.*

SEE JUSTIN MARTYR'S FIRST DIALOGUE WITH TRYPHO.

IT seems to me like yesterday,  
The morning when I took my way  
On that lone shore—in solitude ;  
For in that miserable mood  
It was relief to quit the ken  
And the inquiring looks of men,  
The looks of love and gentleness,  
And pity, that would fain express  
Its only purpose was to know,  
That, knowing, it might soothe my woe :  
But when I felt that I was free  
From searching gaze, it was to me  
Like ending of a dreary task,  
Or putting off a cumbrous mask.

I wandered forth upon the shore,  
Wishing this lie of life was o'er ;  
What was beyond I could not guess,  
I thought it might be quietness,  
And now I had no dream of bliss,  
No thought, no other hope but this,  
To be at rest ;—for all that fed  
The dream of my proud youth had fled.

My dream of youth that I would be  
Happy and glorious, wise and free,  
In mine own right, and keep my state,  
And would repel the heavy weight,  
The load that crushed unto the ground  
The servile multitude around.  
The purpose of my life had failed,  
The heavenly heights I would have scaled  
Seemed more than ever out of sight,  
Further beyond my feeble flight.  
The beauty of the universe  
Was lying on me like a curse ;  
Only the lone surge at my feet  
Uttered a soothing murmur sweet,  
As every broken weary wave  
Sank gently to a quiet grave,  
Dying on the bosom of the sea :  
And death grew beautiful to me,  
Until it seemed a mother mild,  
And I like some too happy child—  
A happy child, that tired with play,  
Through a long summer holiday,  
Runs to his mother's arms to weep  
His little weariness asleep.  
Rest—rest—all passion that once stirred  
My heart, had ended in one word—  
My one desire to be at rest,  
To lay my head on any breast,  
Where there was hope that I might keep  
A dreamless and unbroken sleep ;  
And the lulled Ocean seemed to say,  
' With me is quiet—come away.'  
There was a tale which oft had stirred  
My bosom deeply : you have heard  
How that the treacherous sea-maid's art  
With song inveigles the lost heart

Of some lone fisher, that has stood  
For days beside the glimmering flood ;  
And when has grown upon him there  
The mystery of earth and air,  
He cannot find with whom to part  
The burden lying at his heart ;  
So when the mermaid bids him come,  
And summons to her peaceful home,  
He hears—he leaps into the wave,  
To find a home, and not a grave.  
It stirred me now ; and sweet seemed death ;  
The ceasing of this painful breath,  
The laying down this life of care,  
The breathing of a purer air—  
Sweet seemed they all—a richer thing  
Death, than whatever life could bring.

Anon I said I would not die ;  
I loathed to live—I feared to die—  
So I went forward, till I stood  
Amid a marble solitude,  
A ruined town of ancient day.  
I rested where some steps away  
From other work of human hand  
Two solitary columns stand,  
Two columns on a mild hill-side,  
Like sea-marks of a shrunken tide :  
Their shafts were by the sea-breeze worn,  
Beneath them waved the verdant corn ;  
But a few paces from the crown  
Of that green summit, farther down,  
A fallen pillar on the plain,  
Slow sinking in the earth again,  
Bedding itself in dark black mould,  
Lay moveless, where it first had rolled.

It once had been a pillar high,  
And pointing to the starry sky ;  
But now lay prostrate, its own weight  
Now serving but to fix its state,  
To sink it in its earthy bed.  
I gazed, and to myself I said,  
'This pillar lying on the plain  
The hand of man might raise again,  
And set it as in former days ;  
But the fall'n spirit who shall raise,  
What power on earth ? what power in heaven ?'  
How quickly was an answer given  
Unto this voice of my despair !  
But now I sat in silence there,  
I thought upon the vanished time,  
And my irrevocable prime,  
My baffled purpose, wasted years,  
My sin, my misery—and my tears  
Fell thick and fast upon the sands ;  
I hid my face within my hands,  
For tears are strange that find their way  
Under the open eye of day,  
Under the broad and glorious sun,  
Full in the heavens, as mine have done,  
And as upon that day they did,  
Unnoticed, unrestrained, unchid.  
How long I might have let them flow  
Without a check, I do not know,  
But presently, while yet I kept  
That attitude of woe, and wept,  
A strange voice sounded in mine ears—  
'You cannot wash your heart with tears !'  
I quickly turned, and vexed to be  
Seen in my spirit's agony,  
In anger had almost replied.  
An aged man was at my side ;



I think that since my life began,  
I never saw an older man  
Than he who stood beside me then,  
And with mild accents said again :  
' You cannot cleanse your heart with tears,  
Though you should weep as many years  
As our first Father, when he sat  
Uncomforted on Ararat—  
This would not help you, and the tear  
Which does not heal, will scald and sear.  
What is your sorrow ?'

Until now

I never had unveiled my woe—  
Not that I shunned sweet sympathies,  
Man's words, or woman's pitying eyes ;  
But that I felt they were in vain,  
And could not help me ; for the pain,  
The wound which I was doomed to feel,  
Man gave not, and he could not heal.  
But in this old man's speech and tone  
Was something that allured me on ;  
I told him all—I did not hide  
My sin, my sorrow, or my pride :  
I told him how, when I began  
First to verge upward to a man,  
These thoughts were mine—to dwell alone,  
My spirit on its lordly throne,  
Hating the vain stir, fierce and loud,  
The din of the tumultuous crowd ;  
And how I thought to arm my soul,  
And stablish it in self-control ;  
And said I would obey the right,  
And would be strong in wisdom's might,  
And bow unto my own heart's law,  
And keep my heart from speck or flaw,

That in its mirror I might find  
A reflex of the Eternal mind,  
A glass to give me back the truth—  
And how before me from my youth  
A phantom ever on the wing,  
Appearing now, now vanishing,  
Had flitted, looking out from shrine,  
From painting, or from work divine  
Of poet's, or of sculptor's art ;  
And how I feared it might depart,  
That beauty which alone could shed  
Light on my life—and then I said,  
I would beneath its shadow dwell,  
And would all lovely things compel,  
All that was beautiful or fair  
In art or nature, earth or air,  
To be as ministers to me,  
To keep me pure, to keep me free  
From worldly service, from the chain  
Of custom, and from earthly stain ;  
And how they kept me for awhile,  
And did my foolish heart beguile ;  
Yet all at last did faithless prove,  
And, late or soon, betrayed my love ;  
How they had failed me one by one,  
Till now, my youth yet scarcely done,  
The heart, which I had thought to steep  
In hues of beauty, and to keep  
Its consecrated home and fane,  
That heart was soiled with many a stain,  
Which from without and from within  
Had gathered there, till all was sin,  
Till now I only drew my breath,  
I lived but in the hope of death.

While my last words were giving place  
To my heart's anguish, o'er his face

A shadow of displeasure past,  
 But vanished then again as fast  
 As the breeze-shadow from the brook ;  
 And with soft words and pitying look  
 He gently said—

‘ Ah me, my son,  
 A weary course your life has run ;  
 And yet it need not be in vain,  
 That you have suffered all this pain ;  
 And if my years might make me bold  
 To speak, methinks I could unfold  
 Why in such efforts you could meet  
 But only misery and defeat.  
 Yet deem not of us as at strife,  
 Because you set before your life  
 A purpose and a loftier aim  
 Than the blind lives of men may claim  
 For the most part—or that you sought,  
 By fixed resolve and solemn thought,  
 To lift your being’s calm estate  
 Out of the range of time and fate.  
 Glad am I that a thing unseen,  
 A spiritual Presence, this has been  
 Your worship, this your young heart stirred.  
 But yet herein you proudly erred,  
 Here may the source of woe be found,  
 You thought to fling, yourself around,  
 The atmosphere of light and love  
 In which it was your joy to move ;  
 You thought by efforts of your own  
 To take at last each jarring tone  
 Out of your life, till all should meet  
 In one majestic music sweet ;  
 And deemed that in our own heart’s ground  
 The root of good was to be found,  
 And that by careful watering  
 And earnest tendance we might bring

The bud, the blossom, and the fruit  
To grow and flourish from that root.  
You deemed we needed nothing more  
Than skill and courage to explore  
Deep down enough in our own heart,  
To where the well-head lay apart,  
Which must the springs of being feed,  
And that these fountains did but need  
The soil that choked them moved away,  
To bubble in the open day.  
But, thanks to heaven, it is not so,  
That root a richer soil doth know  
Than our poor hearts could e'er supply,  
That stream is from a source more high ;  
From God it came, to God returns,  
Not nourished from our scanty urns,  
But fed from his unfailing river,  
Which runs and will run on for ever.'

When now he came to heavenly things,  
And spake of them, his spirit had wings,  
His words seemed not his own, but given.  
I could have deemed one spake from heaven  
Of hope and joy, of life and death,  
And immortality through faith,  
Of that great change commenced within,  
The blood that cleanses from all sin,  
That can wash out the inward stain,  
And consecrate the heart again,  
The voice that clearer and more clear  
Speaks ever to the purged ear,  
The gracious influences given  
In a continued stream<sup>4</sup> from heaven,  
The balm that can the soul's hurt heal,  
The Spirit's witness and its seal.

I listened, for unto mine ear  
 The word which I had longed to hear,  
 Was come at last, the life-giving word  
 Which I had often almost heard  
 In some deep silence of my breast—  
 For with a sense of dim unrest  
 That word unborn had often wrought,  
 And struggled in the womb of thought,  
 As from beneath the smothering earth  
 The seed strives upward to a birth :  
 And lo ! it now was born indeed ;  
 Here was the answer to my need.

But now we parted, never more  
 To meet upon that lone sea-shore.  
 We have not met on earth again,  
 And scarcely shall ; there doth remain  
 A time, a place where we shall meet,  
 And have the stars beneath our feet.  
 Since then I many times have sought  
 Who this might be, and sometimes thought  
 It must have been an angel sent  
 To be a special instrument  
 And minister of grace to me ;  
 Or deemed again it might be he,  
 Of whom some say he shall not die,  
 Till he have seen with mortal eye  
 The glory of his Lord again ;  
 But this is a weak thought and vain.

We parted, each upon our way—  
 I homeward, where my glad course lay  
 Beside those ruins where I sate  
 On that same morning—desolate,—  
 With scarcely strength enough to grieve :  
 And now it was a marvellous eve ;

The waters at my feet were bright,  
And breaking into isles of light :  
The misty sunset did enfold  
A thousand floating motes of gold ;  
The red light seemed to penetrate  
Through the worn stone, and re-create  
The old, to glorify anew ;  
And steeping all things through and through  
A rich dissolving splendour poured  
Through rent and fissure, and restored  
The fall'n, the falling, and decayed,  
Filling the rifts which time had made,  
Till the rent masses seemed to meet,  
The pillar stand upon its feet,  
And tower and cornice, roof and stair  
Hung self-upheld in the magic air.  
Transfigured thus those temples stood  
Upon the margin of the flood,  
All glorious as they rose of yore ;  
There standing, as not ever more  
They could be harmed by touch of time,  
But still, as in that perfect prime,  
Must flourish unremoved and free,  
Or as they then appeared to me,  
A newer and more glorious birth,  
A City of that other earth,  
That Earth which is to be.

*THE MONK AND BIRD.*

AS he who finds one flower sharp thorns among,  
Plucks it, and highly prizes, though before  
Careless regard on thousands he has flung,  
As fair as this or more ;

Not otherwise perhaps this argument  
Won from me, where I found it, such regard,  
That I esteemed no labour thereon spent  
As wearisome or hard.

In huge and antique volume did it lie,  
That by two solemn clasps was duly bound,  
As neither to be opened nor laid by  
But with due thought profound.

There fixed thought to questions did I lend,  
Which hover on the bounds of mortal ken,  
And have perplexed, and will unto the end  
Perplex the brains of men ;

Of what is time, and what eternity,  
Of all that seems and is not—forms of things—  
Till my tired spirit followed painfully  
On flagging weary wings ;

So that I welcomed this one resting-place,  
Pleased as a bird, which, when its forces fail,  
Lights panting in the ocean's middle space  
Upon a sunny sail.

And now the grace of fiction, which has power  
To render things impossible believed,  
And win them with the credence of an hour  
To be for truths received—

That grace must help me, as it only can,  
Winning such transient credence, while I tell  
What to a cloistered solitary man  
In distant times befell.

Him little might our earthly grandeur feed,  
Who to the uttermost was vowed to be  
A follower of his Master's barest need  
In holy poverty.

Nor might he know the gentle mutual strife  
Of home-affections, which can more or less  
Temper with sweet the bitter of our life,  
And lighten its distress.

Yet we should err to deem that he was left  
To bear alone our being's lonely weight,  
Or that his soul was vacant and bereft  
Of pomp and inward state :

Morn, when before the sun his orb unshrouds,  
Swift as a beacon torch the light has sped,  
Kindling the dusky summits of the clouds  
Each to a fiery red—

The slanted columns of the noon-day light,  
Let down into the bosom of the hills,  
Or sunset, that with golden vapour bright  
The purple mountains fills—



These made him say,—If God has so arrayed  
A fading world that quickly passes by,  
Such rich provision of delight has made  
For every human eye,

What shall the eyes that wait for him survey,  
Where his own presence gloriously appears  
In worlds that were not founded for a day,  
But for eternal years ?

And if at seasons this world's undelight  
Oppressed him, or the hollow at its heart,  
One glance at those enduring mansions bright  
Made gloomier thoughts depart ;

Till many times the sweetness of the thought  
Of an eternal country—where it lies  
Removed from care and mortal anguish, brought  
Sweet tears into his eyes.

Thus, not unsolaced, he longwhile abode,  
Filling all dreary melancholy time  
And empty spaces of the heart with God,  
And with this hope sublime :

Even thus he lived, with little joy or pain  
Drawn through the channels whereby men receive—  
Most men receive the things which for the main  
Make them rejoice or grieve.

But for delight, on spiritual gladness fed,  
And obvious to temptations of like kind ;  
One such, from out his very gladness bred,  
It was his lot to find.

When first it came, he lightly put it by,  
But it returned again to him ere long,  
And ever having got some new ally,  
And every time more strong—

A little worm that gnawed the life away  
Of a tall plant, the canker of its root,  
Or like as when from some small speck decay  
Spreads o'er a beauteous fruit.

For still the doubt came back,—Can God provide  
For the large heart of man what shall not pall,  
Nor through eternal ages' endless tide  
On tired spirits fall?

Here but one look tow'rd heaven will oft repress  
The crushing weight of undelightful care ;  
But what were there beyond, if weariness  
Should ever enter there ?

Yet do not sweetest things here soonest cloy ?  
Satiety the life of joy would kill,  
If sweet with bitter, pleasure with annoy  
Were not attempered still.

This mood endured, till every act of love,  
Vigils of praise and prayer, and midnight choir,  
All shadows of the service done above,  
And which, while his desire,

And while his hope was heavenward, he had loved,  
As helps to disengage him from the chain  
That fastens unto earth—all these now proved  
Most burdensome and vain.

What must have been the issue of that mood  
It were a thing to fear—but that one day,  
Upon the limits of an ancient wood,  
His thoughts him led astray.

Darkling he went, nor once applied his ear,  
(On a loud sea of agitations thrown,)  
Nature's low tones and harmonies to hear,  
Heard by the calm alone.

The merry chirrup of the grasshopper,  
Sporting among the roots of withered grass,  
The dry leaf rustling to the wind's light stir,  
Did each unnoted pass :

He, walking in a trance of selfish care,  
Not once observed the beauty shed around,  
The blue above, the music in the air,  
The flowers upon the ground :

Till from the centre of that forest dim  
Came to him such sweet singing of a bird,  
As, sweet in very truth, then seemed to him  
The sweetest ever heard.

That lodestar drew him onward inward still,  
Deeper than where the village children stray,  
Deeper than where the woodman's glittering bill  
Lops the large boughs away—

Into a central space of glimmering shade,  
Where hardly might the struggling sunbeams pass,  
Which a faint lattice-work of light had made  
Upon the long lank grass.

He did not sit, but stood and listened there,  
And to him listening the time seemed not long,  
While that sweet bird above him filled the air  
With its melodious song.

He heard not, saw not, felt not aught beside,  
Through the wide worlds of pleasure and of pain,  
Save the full flowing and the ample tide  
Of that celestial strain.

As though a bird of Paradise should light  
A moment on a twig of this bleak earth,  
And singing songs of Paradise invite  
All hearts to holy mirth,

And then take wing to Paradise again,  
Leaving all listening spirits raised above  
The toil of earth, the trouble, and the pain,  
And melted all in love :

Such hidden might, such power was in the sound ;  
But when it ceased sweet music to unlock,  
The spell that held him sense and spirit-bound  
Dissolved with a slight shock.

All things around were as they were before—  
The trees, and the blue sky, and sunshine bright,  
Painting the pale and leafstrewn forest-floor  
With patches of faint light.

But as when music doth no longer thrill,  
Light shudderings yet along the chords will run,  
Or the heart vibrates tremulously still,  
Although its prayer be done,

So his heart fluttered all the way he went,  
Listening each moment for the vesper bell ;  
For a long hour he deemed he must have spent  
In that untrodden dell.

And once it seemed that something new or strange  
Had passed upon the flowers, the trees, the ground ;  
Some slight but unintelligible change  
On everything around :

Such change, where all things undisturbed remain,  
As only to the eye of him appears,  
Who absent long, at length returns again—  
The silent work of years.

And ever grew upon him more and more  
Fresh marvel—for, unrecognized of all,  
He stood a stranger at the convent door :  
New faces filled the hall.

Yet was it long ere he received the whole  
Of that strange wonder—how, while he had stood  
Lost in deep gladness of his inmost soul,  
Far hidden in that wood,

Three generations had gone down unseen  
Under the thin partition that is spread—  
The thin partition of thin earth—between  
The living and the dead.

Nor did he many days to earth belong,  
For like a pent-up stream, released again,  
The years arrested by the strength of song  
Came down on him amain ;

Sudden as a dissolving thaw in spring ;  
 Gentle as when upon the first warm day,  
 Which sunny April in its train may bring,  
 The snow melts all away.

They placed him in his former cell, and there  
 Watched him departing ; what few words he said  
 Were of calm peace and gladness, with one care  
 Mingled—one only dread—

Lest an eternity should not suffice  
 To take the measure and the breadth and height  
 Of what there is reserved in Paradise—  
 Its ever-new delight.

*TO A CHILD PLAYING.*

DEAR boy, thy momentary laughter rings  
 Sincerely out, and that spontaneous glee,  
 Seeming to need no hint from outward things,  
 Breaks forth in sudden shoutings, loud and free.

From what hid fountains doth thy joyance flow,  
 That borrows nothing from the world around ?  
 Its springs must deeper lie than we can know,  
 A well whose springs lie safely underground.

So be it ever—and, thou happy boy,  
 When time, that takes these wild delights away,  
 Gives thee a measure of sedater joy,  
 Which, unlike this, shall ever with thee stay ;

Then may that joy, like this, to outward things  
Owe nothing, but lie safe beneath the sod,  
A hidden fountain fed from unseen springs,  
From the glad-making river of our God.

*A WALK IN A CHURCHYARD.*

WE walked within the Churchyard bounds,  
My little boy and I—  
He laughing, running happy rounds,  
I pacing mournfully.

‘Nay, child ! it is not well,’ I said,  
‘Among the graves to shout,  
To laugh and play among the dead,  
And make this noisy rout.’

A moment to my side he clung,  
Leaving his merry play,  
A moment stilled his joyous tongue,  
Almost as hushed as they ;

Then, quite forgetting the command  
In life’s exulting burst  
Of early glee, let go my hand,  
Joyous as at the first.

And now I did not check him more  
For, taught by Nature’s face,  
I had grown wiser than before  
Even in that moment’s space :

*She* spread no funeral pall above  
That patch of churchyard ground,  
But the same azure vault of love  
As hung o'er all around.

And white clouds o'er that spot would pass  
As freely as elsewhere ;  
The sunshine on no other grass  
A richer hue might wear.

And formed from out that very mould  
In which the dead did lie,  
The daisy with its eye of gold  
Looked up into the sky.

The rook was wheeling overhead,  
Nor hastened to be gone—  
The small bird did its glad notes shed,  
Perched on a grey head-stone.

And God, I said, would never give  
This light upon the earth,  
Nor bid in childhood's heart to live  
These springs of gushing mirth,

If our one wisdom was to mourn,  
And linger with the dead,  
To nurse, as wisest, thoughts forlorn  
Of worm and earthy bed.

Oh no, the glory earth puts on,  
The child's unchecked delight,  
Both witness to a triumph won—  
(If we but read aright,)



A triumph won o'er sin and death,  
From these the Saviour saves ;  
And, like a happy infant, Faith  
Can play among the graves.

*TO —,*

ON THE DAY OF HER BAPTISM.

THIS will we name thy better birth-day, child,  
Oh born already to a sin-worn world,  
But now unto a kingdom undefiled,  
Where over thee love's banner is unfurled.

Lo ! on the morning of this holy day  
I lay aside the weight of human fears,  
Which I had for thee, and without dismay  
Look through the avenue of coming years :

I see thee passing without mortal harm  
Through ranks of foes against thy safety met ;  
I see thee passing, thy defence and charm,  
The seal of God upon thy forehead set.

From this time forth thou often shalt hear say  
Of what immortal City thou wert given  
The rights and full immunities to-day,  
And of the hope laid up for thee in heaven :

From this time forward thou shalt not believe  
That thou art earthly, or that aught of earth  
Or aught that hell can threaten, shall receive  
Power on the children of the second birth.

Oh risen out of death into the day  
Of an immortal life, we bid thee hail,  
And will not kiss the waterdrops away,  
The dew that rests upon thy forehead pale.

And if the seed of better life lie long,  
As in a wintry hiddenness and death,  
Then calling back this day, we will be strong  
To wait in hope for heaven's reviving breath ;

To water, if there should be such sad need,  
The undiscern'd germ with sorrowing tears,  
To wait until from that undying seed  
Out of the earth a heavenly plant appears ;

The growth and produce of a fairer land,  
And thence transplanted to a barren soil,  
It needs the tendance of a careful hand,  
Of love, that is not weary with long toil :

And thou, dear child, whose very helplessness  
Is as a bond upon us and a claim,  
Mayest thou have this of us, as we no less  
Have daily from our Father known the same.

*TO MY GODCHILD,*

ON THE DAY OF HIS BAPTISM.

NO harsh transitions Nature knows,  
No dreary spaces intervene ;  
Her work in silence forward goes,  
And rather felt than seen :

For where the watcher, who with eye  
Turned eastward, yet could ever say  
When the faint glooming in the sky  
First lightened into day ?

Or maiden, by an opening flower  
That many a summer morn has stood,  
Could fix upon the very hour  
It ceased to be a bud ?

The rainbow colours mix and blend  
Each with the other, until none  
Can tell where fainter hues had end,  
And deeper tints begun.

But only doth this much appear—  
That the pale hues are deeper grown ;  
The day has broken bright and clear ;  
The bud is fully blown.

Dear child, and happy shalt thou be,  
If from this hour with just increase  
All good things shall grow up in thee,  
By such unmarked degrees :

If there shall be no dreary space  
Between thy present self and past,  
No dreary miserable place -  
With spectral shapes against ;

But the full graces of thy prime  
Shall, in their weak beginnings, be  
Lost in an unremembered time  
Of holy infancy.

This blessing is the first and best ;  
Yet has not prayer been made in vain  
For them, though not so amply blest,  
The lost and found again.

And shouldest thou, alas ! forbear  
To choose the better, nobler lot,  
Yet may we not esteem our prayer  
Unheard or heeded not ;

If after many a wandering,  
And many a devious pathway trod,  
If having known that bitter thing,  
To leave the Lord thy God ;

It yet shall be, that thou at last,  
Although thy noon be lost, return  
To bind life's eve in union fast  
With this, its blessed morn.

*TO AN INFANT SLEEPING.*

O H drinking deep of slumber's holy wine,  
Whence may the smile that lights thy countenance be  
We seek in vain the mystery to divine ;  
For in thy dim unconscious infancy  
No games as yet, no playfellows are thine,  
To stir in waking hours such thoughts of glee,  
As, recollected in thine innocent dream,  
Might shed across thy face this happy gleam.

It may be, though small notice thou canst take,  
Thou feelest that an atmosphere of love  
Is ever round thee, sleeping or awake :  
Thou wakest, and kind faces from above  
Bend o'er thee ; when thou sleepest, for thy sake  
All sounds are hushed, and each doth gently move :  
And this dim consciousness of tender care  
Has caused thy cheek this light of joy to wear.

Or it may be, thoughts deeper than we deem  
Visit an infant's slumbers : God is near,  
Angels are talking with them in their dream,  
Angelic voices whispering sweet and clear :  
And round them lies that region's holy gleam,  
But newly left, and light which is not here ;  
And thus has come that smile upon thy face,  
At tidings brought thee from thy native place.

But whatsoe'er the causes which beguiled  
That dimple on thy countenance, it is gone ;  
Fair is the lake disturbed by ripple mild,  
But not less fair when ripple it has none :

And now what deep repose is thine, dear child,

What smoothness thy unruffled cheek has won !  
 Oh ! who that gazed upon thee could forbear  
 The silent breathing of an heart-felt prayer !

*TO A FRIEND,*

ENTERING THE MINISTRY.

**H**IGH thoughts at first, and visions high  
 Are ours of easy victory ;  
 The word we bear seems so divine,  
 So framed for Adam's guilty line,  
 That none, unto ourselves we say,  
 Of all his sinning suffering race  
 Will hear that word, so full of grace,  
 And coldly turn away.

But soon a sadder mood comes round ;  
 High hopes have fallen to the ground,  
 And the ambassadors of peace  
 Go weeping, that men will not cease  
 To strive with heaven—they inly mourn,  
 That suffering men will not be blest,  
 That weary men refuse to rest,  
 And wanderers to return.

Well is it, if has not ensued  
 Another, yet unworthier, mood,  
 When all unfaithful thoughts have way,  
 When we hang down our hands, and say,  
 ' Alas ! it is a weary pain  
 To seek with toil and fruitless strife  
 To chafe the numbed limbs into life,  
 That will not live again.'

Then if spring odours on the wind  
Float by, they bring into our mind  
That it were wiser done, to give  
Our hearts to nature, and to live  
For her ; or in the student's bower  
To search into her hidden things,  
And seek in books the wondrous springs  
Of knowledge and of power.

Or if we dare not thus draw back,  
Yet oh ! to shun the crowded track  
And the rude throng of men ! to dwell  
In hermitage or lonely cell,  
Feeding all longings that aspire  
Like incense heavenward, and with care  
And lonely vigil nursing there  
Faith's solitary pyre.

Oh ! let not us this thought allow—  
The heat, the dust upon our brow,  
Signs of the contest, we may wear :  
Yet thus we shall appear more fair  
In our Almighty Master's eye,  
Than if in fear to lose the bloom,  
Or ruffle the soul's lightest plume,  
We from the strife should fly.

And for the rest, in weariness,  
In disappointment, or distress,  
When strength decays, or hope grows dim,  
We ever may recur to Him,  
Who has the golden oil divine,  
Wherewith to feed our failing urns,  
Who watches every lamp that burns  
Before his sacred shrine.

*ANTI-GNOSTICUS.*

WHO, loving leisure and his studious ease,  
And books, and what of noblest lore they bring,  
Will not confess that sometimes, called aside  
To humbler work and less delightful tasks,  
He has been tempted to exclaim in heart—  
‘How pleasant were it might we only dwell,  
And ever hold sweet converse undisturbed  
Thus with the choicest spirits of the world  
In council, and in letters, and in arms.  
Easy to live with, always at command,  
They come at bidding, at our word depart  
Friends whose society not ever cloy.  
Glorious it were by intercourse with these  
To learn whatever men have thought or done,  
And travel the great orb of knowledge round.  
But oh ! how most unwelcome the constraint,  
How harsh the summons bidding us to pause,  
And for a season turn from our high toils,  
From that serener atmosphere come down,  
And grow perforce acquainted with the woe,  
The strife, the discord of the actual world,  
And all the ignoble work beneath the sun.’

These were my thoughts and words the other day  
And such they oftentimes have been before,  
When I have turned reluctantly, and left  
The pleasant labours I had found at home,  
For ruder and less grateful tasks abroad,  
Which duty would not suffer to put by.  
But other feelings occupied my heart,  
And other words found utterance from my lips,



When that day's work was finished, and my feet  
Again turned homeward—alteration strange  
Of feeling, with a better humbler mind.  
For I was thankful now, and not alone  
That I had been brought under the blue sky,  
With winds of heaven to blow upon my cheeks,  
And flowers of earth to smile about my feet,  
And birds of air to sing within my ears—  
Though that were something, something to exchange  
Continuous study in a lonely room  
For the sweet face of nature, sights and sounds  
Of earth and air, restoring influences  
Of power to cheer ;—yet not for this alone,  
Nor for this chiefly ; but that thus I was  
Compelled, as by a gentle violence,  
Not in the pages of dead books alone,  
Nor merely in the fair page nature shows,  
But in the living page of human life  
To look and learn—not merely left to spin  
Fine webs and woofs around me like the worm,  
Till in mine own coil I had hid myself,  
And quite shut out the light of common day,  
And common air by which men breathe and live—  
That being in a world of sin and woe,  
Of woe that might in some part be assuaged,  
Of sin that might be lessened in some part,  
Heaven in its mercy did not suffer me  
To live and dwell wholly apart from these ;  
Knowing no more of them than men who live  
At home in ease, by hearsay know of lands  
Which the bold pilgrim has with his own eyes  
Seen, with his own feet trod : and now I felt,  
It was brought home unto my heart of hearts,  
That doom is none more pitiable than his,  
Who has created a heart-solitude,  
Raised a partition wall to separate

Between himself and any of his kind ;  
There was no doom more pitiable than his,  
Who at safe distance hears life's stormy waves,  
Which break for ever on a rugged shore,  
In which are shipwrecked mariners, for their lives  
Contending some, some momentarily sucked up,  
But as a gentle murmur afar off  
To soothe his sleep, and lull him in his dreams :  
Who, while he boasts he has been building up  
A palace for himself, in sooth has reared  
What shall be first his prison, then his tomb.

And now how different my request and prayer :  
Give me, I said, give me a heart that beats  
In all its pulses with the common heart  
Of humankind, which the same things make glad,  
The same make sorry ; give me grace enough  
Even in their first beginnings to detect  
Endeavours which the proud heart still is making  
To cut itself from off the common root,  
To set itself upon a private base,  
To have wherein to glory of its own,  
Beside the common glory of the kind ;  
Each such attempt in all its hateful pride  
And meanness, give me to detect and loathe,—  
A man, and claiming fellowship with men.

I said—Oh ! lead me oftentimes to huts  
Where poor men lie, that I may learn the stuff  
Which life is made of, its true joys and griefs,  
What things are daily bringing grief or joy  
Unto the hearts of millions of my race.  
Oh ! lead me oft to huts where poor men lie,  
Not in the hope fantastical to find  
That Innocence, from palaces exiled,  
Has taken refuge under sordid roofs ;

But knowing what of evil, what of good  
Is to be looked for there, and with firm faith,  
That for the eye made wise by charity,  
Much good will there as everywhere be found—  
Patience by lengthened suffering not outworn,  
Promptness to aid in one another's needs,  
With self-denial, yea, heroic acts,  
The more heroic, as not knowing themselves  
For such at all,—and there not seldom too  
Such thankfulness for small things, such content  
Under the absence of most earthly good,  
As might rebuke the pining discontent  
That haunts too often rich men's palaces.  
These schools of wisdom make me to frequent,  
That I may learn what is not learned elsewhere ;  
What is not to be learned by haunting long  
The shady spaces of philosophy ;  
Lore which even he will fail of, who beside  
The streams of *heavenly* wisdom evermore  
Is lingering, if he have no purpose there,  
Except to gather for his own delight  
The bright and beauteous flowers which there are found.

### LOVE.

SEEMETH not Love at times so occupied  
For thee, as though it cared for none beside?

To great and small things Love alike can reach,  
And cares for each as all, and all as each.

Love of my bonds partook, that I might be  
In turn partaker of its liberty.

Love found me in the wilderness, at cost  
Of painful quests, when I myself had lost.

Love on its shoulders joyfully did lay  
Me, weary with the greatness of my way.

Love lit the lamp and swept the house all round,  
Till the lost money in the end was found.

Love the King's image there would stamp again,  
Effaced in part, and soiled with rust and stain.

'Twas Love, whose quick and ever-watchful eye  
The wanderer's first step homeward did espy.

From its own wardrobe Love gave word to bring  
What things I needed—shoes, and robe, and ring.

Love threatens that it may not strike ; and still  
Unheeded, strikes, that so it may not kill.

Love set me up on high ; when I grew vain  
Of that my height, Love brought me down again.

Love often draws good for us from our ill,  
Skilful to bless us even against our will.

The bond-servant of Love alone is free ;  
All other freedom is but slavery.

How far above all price Love's costly wine,  
Which can the meanest chalice make divine !

Fear this effects, that I do not the ill,  
Love more—that I thereunto have no will.

Seeds burst not their dark cells without a throe ;  
All birth is effort ; shall not Love's be so ?

Love weeps, but from its eyes these two things win  
The largest tears—its own, its brother's sin.

The sweetness of the trodden camomile  
Is Love's, which, injured, yields more sweets the while.

The heart of Love is with a thousand woes  
Pierced, which secure indifference never knows.

The rose aye wears the silent thorn at heart,  
And never yet might pain from Love depart.

Once o'er this painful earth a man did move,  
The Man of griefs, because the Man of Love.

Hope, Faith, and Love at God's high altar shine,  
Lamp triple-branched, and fed with oil divine.

Two of these triple-lights shall once grow pale,  
They burn without, but Love within the veil.

Nothing is true but Love, nor aught of worth ;  
Love is the incense which doth sweeten earth.

O merchant at heaven's mart for heavenly ware,  
Love is the only coin which passes there.

The wine of Love can be obtained of none,  
Save Him who trod the winepress all alone.

*‘REJOICE EVERMORE.’*

BUT how shall we be glad?  
We that are journeying through a vale of tears,  
Encompassed with a thousand woes and fears,  
How should we not be sad?

Angels, that ever stand  
Within the presence-chamber, and there raise  
The never-interrupted hymn of praise,  
May welcome this command :

Or they whose strife is o’er,  
Who all their weary length of life have trod,  
As pillars now within the temple’ of God,  
That shall go out no more.

But we who wander here,  
We who are exiled in this gloomy place,  
Still doomed to water earth’s unthankful face  
With many a bitter tear—

Bid us lament and mourn,  
Bid us that we go mourning all the day,  
And we will find it easy to obey,  
Of our best things forlorn ;

But not that we be glad ;  
If it be true the mourners are the blest,  
Oh leave us in a world of sin, unrest,  
And trouble, to be sad.

I spake, and thought to weep,—  
For sin and sorrow, suffering and crime,  
That fill the world, all mine appointed time  
A settled grief to keep.

When lo ! as day from night,  
As day from out the womb of night forlorn,  
So from that sorrow was that gladness born,  
Even in mine own despite.

Yet was not that by this  
Excluded ; at the coming of that joy  
Fled not that grief, nor did that grief destroy  
The newly-risen bliss :

But side by side they flow,  
Two fountains flowing from one smitten heart,  
And oftentimes scarcely to be known apart—  
That gladness and that woe ;

Two fountains from one source,  
Or which from two such neighbouring sources run  
That aye for him who shall unseal the one,  
The other flows perforce.

And both are sweet and calm,  
Fair flowers upon the banks of either blow,  
Both fertilize the soil, and where they flow  
Shed round them holy balm

*SONNET.*

OUR course is onward, onward into light :  
What though the darkness gathereth amain,  
Yet to return or tarry, both are vain.  
How tarry, when around us is thick night ?  
Whither return ? what flower yet ever might,  
In days of gloom and cold and stormy rain,  
Enfold itself in its green bud again,  
Hiding from wrath of tempest out of sight ?  
Courage—we travel through a darksome cave ;  
But still as nearer to the light we draw,  
Fresh gales will reach us from the upper air,  
And wholesome dews of heaven our foreheads lave,  
The darkness lighten more, till full of awe  
We stand in the open sunshine unaware.

*SONNET.*

THOU cam'st not to thy place by accident,  
It is the very place God meant for thee ;  
And shouldst thou there small scope for action see,  
Do not for this give room to discontent ;  
Nor let the time thou owest to God be spent  
In idly dreaming how thou mightest be,  
In what concerns thy spiritual life, more free  
From outward hindrance or impediment.  
For presently this hindrance thou shalt find  
That without which all goodness were a task  
So slight, that virtue never could grow strong :  
And wouldst thou do one duty to his mind,  
The Imposer's—over-burdened thou shalt ask,  
And own the need of grace to help, ere long.



*SONNET.*

WHAT good soever in thy heart or mind  
Doth yet no higher source nor fountain own  
Than thine own self, nor bow to other throne,  
Suspect and fear ; although therein thou find  
High purpose to go forth and bless thy kind,  
Or in the awful temple of thy soul  
To worship what is loveliest, and control  
The ill within, and by strong laws to bind.  
Good is of God—no good is therefore sure,  
Which has dared wander from its source away :  
Laws without sanction will not long endure,  
Love will grow faint and fainter day by day,  
And Beauty from the straight path will allure,  
And weakening first, will afterwards betray.

*SONNET.*

A WRETCHED thing it were, to have our heart  
Like a thronged highway or a populous street  
Where every idle thought has leave to meet,  
Pause, or pass on as in an open mart ;  
Or like some road-side pool, which no nice art  
Has guarded that the cattle may not beat  
And foul it with a multitude of feet,  
Till of the heavens it can give back no part.  
But keep thou thine a holy solitude,  
For He who would walk there, would walk alone ;  
He who would drink there, must be first endued  
With single right to call that stream his own ;  
Keep thou thine heart, close-fastened, unrevealed,  
A fenced garden and a fountain sealed.

*SONNET.*

WHAT is the greatness of a fallen king ?  
This—that his fall avails not to abate  
His spirit to a level with his fate,  
Or inward fall along with it to bring ;  
That he disdains to stoop his former wing,  
But keeps in exile and in want the law  
Of kingship yet, and counts it scorn to draw  
Comfort indign from any meaner thing.  
Soul, that art fallen from thine ancient place,  
May'st thou in this mean world find nothing great  
Nor aught that shall the memories efface  
Of that true greatness which was once thine own,  
As knowing thou must keep thy kingly state,  
If thou wouldst reascend thy kingly throne.

*SONNET.*

TO feel that we are homeless exiles here,  
To listen to the world's discordant tone,  
As to a private discord of our own,  
To know that we are fallen from a sphere  
Of higher being, pure, serene, and clear,  
Into the darkness of this dim estate—  
This thought may sometimes make us desolate,  
For this we may shed many a secret tear.  
But to mistake our dungeon for a throne,  
Our place of exile for our native land,  
To hear no discords in the universe,  
To find no matter over which to groan,  
This (oh ! that men would rightly understand !)  
This, seeming better, were indeed far worse.

*THE HERRING-FISHERS OF LOCHFYNE.*

DEEM not these fishers idle, though by day  
You hear the snatches of their lazy song,  
And see them listlessly the sunlight long  
Strew the curved beach of this indented bay :  
So deemed I, till I viewed their trim array  
Of boats last night,—a busy armament,  
With sails as dark as that Athenian bent  
Upon his fatal rigging, take their way.  
Rising betimes, I could not choose but look  
For their return ; and when along the lake  
The morning mists were curling, saw them make  
Homeward, returning toward their quiet nook,  
With draggled nets down hanging to the tide,  
Weary, and leaning o'er their vessels' side.

*IN THE ISLE OF MULL.*

THE clouds are gathering in their western dome,  
Deep-drenched with sunlight, as a fleece with dew,  
While I with baffled effort still pursue  
And track these waters toward their mountain home,—  
In vain—though cataract, and mimic foam,  
And island-spots, round which the streamlet threw  
Its sister arms, which joyed to meet anew,  
Have lured me on, and won me still to roam ;  
Till now, coy nymph, unseen thy waters pass,  
Or faintly struggle through the twinkling grass,—  
And I, thy springs unvisited, return.  
Is it that thou art revelling with thy peers ?  
Or dost thou feed a solitary urn,  
Else unreplenished, with thy own sad tears ?

*THE SAME.*

SWEET Water-nymph, more shy than Arethuse,  
Why wilt thou hide from me thy green retreat,  
Where duly thou with silver-sandalled feet,  
And every Naiad, her green locks profuse,  
Welcome with dance sad evening, or unloose,  
To share your revel, an oak-cinctured throng,  
Oread and Dryad, who the daylight long  
By rock, or cave, or antique forest, use  
To shun the wood-god and his rabble bold ?  
Such comes not now, or who with impious strife  
Would seek to untenant meadow, stream, and plain  
Of that indwelling power, which is the life  
And which sustaineth each ; which poets old  
As god and goddess thus have loved to feign.

*AT SEA.*

THE sea is like a mirror far and near,  
And ours a prosperous voyage, safe from harms ;  
Yet may the thought that everlasting arms  
Are round us and about us, be as dear  
Now when no sight of danger doth appear,  
As though our vessel did its blind way urge  
'Mid the long weltering of the dreariest surge,  
Through which a perishing bark did ever steer.  
Lord of the calm and tempest, be it ours,  
Poor mariners ! to pay due vows to Thee,  
Though not a cloud on all the horizon lowers  
Of all our life ; for even this way shall we  
Have greater boldness toward Thee, when indeed  
The storm is up, and there is earnest need.

*AN EVENING IN FRANCE.*

ONE star is shining in the crimson eve,  
And the thin texture of the faint blue sky  
Above is like a veil intensely drawn ;  
Upon the spirit with a solemn weight  
The marvel and the mystery of eve  
Is lying, as all holy thoughts and calm,  
By the vain stir and tumult of the day  
Chased far away, come back on tranquil wing,  
Like doves returning to their noted haunts.  
It is the solemn even-tide—the hour  
Of holy musings, and to us no less  
Of sweet refreshment for the bodily frame  
Than for the spirit, harassed both and worn  
With a long day of travel ; and methinks  
It must have been an evening such as this,  
After a day of toilsome journeyings o'er,  
When looking out on Tiber, as we now  
Look out on this fair river flowing by,  
Together sat the saintly Monica,  
And with her, given unto her prayers, that son,  
The turbid stream of whose tumultuous youth  
Now first was running smooth and bright and clear :  
And solitary sitting in the niche  
Of a deep window held delightful talk,  
Such as they never could have known before,  
Of what must be the glorious life in heaven ;  
And looking forth on meadow, stream, and sky,  
And on the golden west, that richest glow  
Of sunset to the uncreated light,  
Which must invest for ever those bright worlds,

Did unto them seem darkness ; and earth's best,  
Its dearest pleasures, they with one consent  
Counted as vile, nor once to be compared,  
Oh ! rather say not worthy to be named,  
With what is to be looked for there ; and thus  
Leaving behind them all things which are seen,  
By many a stately stair they did ascend  
Above the earth and all created things,  
The sun and starry heavens—yea, and above  
The mind of man, until they did attain  
Where light no shadow has, and life no death,  
Where past or future are not, nor can be,  
But an eternal present, and the Lamb  
His people feeds from indeficient streams.  
Then pausing for a moment, to drink in  
That river of delights, at length they cried—  
' Oh ! to be thus for ever, and to hear  
Thus in the silence of the lower world,  
And in the silence of all thoughts that keep  
Vain stir within, unutterable words,  
And with the splendour of his majesty,  
Whose seat is in the middle of the throne,  
Thus to be fed for ever—this must be  
The beatific vision, the third heaven.  
What we have for these passing moments known,  
To know the same for ever—this would be  
That life whereof even now we held debate :  
When will it be ? oh when ?'

These things they said,  
And for a season breathed immortal air,  
But then perforce returned to earth again,  
To this inferior region, while the air  
In that empyreal climate is too fine  
For our long breathing, who still bear about us  
Our gross investiture of mortal weeds.  
Yet not for nothing had their spirits flown

To those high regions, bringing back at once  
A reconciliation with the mean things here,  
And a more earnest longing for what there  
Of nobler is by partial glimpses thus  
Seen through the crannies of the prison house.  
And she, that mother—such entire content  
Possessed her bosom, and her Lord had filled  
The orb of her desires so round and full,  
Had answered all her prayers for her lost son  
With such an overmeasure of his grace,—  
She had no more to ask, and did not know  
Why she should tarry any longer here,  
Nor what she did on earth. Thus then she felt,  
And to these thoughts which overflowed her heart  
Gave thankful utterance meet ; nor many days  
After this vision and foretaste of joy,  
Inherited the substance of the things  
Which she had seen, and entered into peace.

*THE DESCENT OF THE RHONE.*

OFTEN when my thought has been  
Pondering on what sight once seen,  
What of all the glorious shows  
Nature can at will disclose,  
Once beholden, would supply  
To the spirit's inward eye  
Most unfailing treasures, which  
Would the memory most enrich  
With its spectacles of power—  
It has seemed no ampler dower  
Of her sights and solemn shows  
She to any would disclose  
Than to one, who night and day,  
An illimitable way,  
Should sail down some mighty river,  
Sailing as to sail for ever.

Lo ! my wish is partly won ;  
Swiftly flows the stately Rhone ;  
And we loosen from the shore  
Our light pinnace, long before  
The young East in gorgeous state  
Has unlocked his ruby gate,  
And our voyage is not done  
At the sinking of the sun ;  
But for us the azure Night  
Feeds her golden flocks with light :  
All the changeful hues of heaven,  
Sights and sounds of morn and even,  
All unto our eyes are given.



In our view the day is born ;  
First the stars of lustre shorn,  
Then o'er heaven faint bloom is spread,  
And the clouds blush deeper red,  
Till from them the stream below  
Catches the same roseate glow ;  
Lightens the pale east to gold,  
And the west is with the fold  
Of the mantle of dim night  
Scarcely darkened or less bright—  
Till, his way prepared, at length  
Rising giantlike in strength,  
Tramples the victorious sun  
The dying stars out, one by one.

Fairer scene the opening eye  
Of the day can scarce descry,  
Fairer sight he looks not on  
Than the pleasant banks of Rhone ;  
Where in terraces and ranks,  
On those undulating banks,  
Rise by many a hilly stair  
Sloping tiers of vines, where'er  
From the steep and stony soil  
Has been won by careful toil,  
And with long laborious pains  
Fenced against the washing rains,  
Fenced and anxiously walled round,  
Some small patch of garden ground.  
Higher still some place of power,  
Or a solitary tower,  
Ruined now, is looking down  
On the quiet little town  
In a sheltered glen beneath,  
Where the smoke's unbroken wreath

Mounting in the windless air,  
Rests, dissolving slowly there,  
O'er the housetops like a cloud,  
Or a thinnest vaporous shroud.

Morn has been, and lo ! how soon  
Has arrived the middle noon,  
And the broad sun's rays do rest  
On some naked mountain's breast,  
Where alone relieve the eye  
Massive shadows, as they lie  
In the hollows motionless ;  
Still our boat doth onward press :  
Now a peaceful current wide  
Bears it on an ample tide,  
Now the hills retire, and then  
Their broad fronts advance again,  
Till the rocks have closed us round,  
And would seem our course to bound,  
But anon a path appears,  
And our vessel onward steers,  
Darting rapidly between  
Narrow walls of a ravine.

Morn has been and noon—and now  
Evening falls about our prow :  
'Mid the clouds that kindling won  
Light and fire from him, the Sun  
For a moment's space was lying,  
Phoenix in his own flames dying !  
And a sunken splendour still  
Glows behind the western hill ;  
Lo ! the starry troop again  
Gather on the ethereal plain ;  
Even now and there were none,  
And a moment since but one ;

And anon we lift our head,  
And all heaven is overspread  
With a still assembling crowd,  
With a silent multitude—  
Vesper, first and brightest set  
In the night's fair coronet,  
Armed Orion's belted pride,  
And the Seven that by the side  
Of the Titan nightly weave  
Dances in the mystic eve,  
Sisters linked in love and light.  
'Twere in truth a solemn sight,  
Were we sailing now as they,  
Who upon their western way  
To the isles of spice and gold,  
Nightly watching, might behold  
These our constellations dip,  
And the great sign of the Ship  
Rise upon the other hand,  
With the Cross, aye seen to stand  
In the vault of heaven upright,  
At the middle hour of night—  
Or with them whose keels first prest  
The huge rivers of the west,  
Who the first with bold intent  
Down the Orellana went,  
Or a dangerous progress won  
On the mighty Amazon,  
By whose ocean-streams they told  
Of the warrior-maidens bold.

But the fancy may not roam  
Thou wilt keep it nearer home  
Friend, of earthly friends the best,  
Who on this fair river's breast

Sailest with me fleet and fast,  
As the unremitting blast  
With a steady breath and strong  
Urges our light bark along.  
We this day have found delight  
In each pleasant sound and sight  
Of this river bright and fair,  
And in things which flowing are  
Like a stream ; yet without blame  
These my passing song may claim,  
Or thy hearing may beguile,  
If we not forget the while,  
That we are from childhood's morn  
On a mightier river borne,  
Which is rolling evermore  
To a sea without a shore,  
Life the river, and the sea  
That we seek—eternity.  
We may sometimes sport and play,  
And in thought keep holiday,  
So we ever own a law,  
Living in habitual awe,  
And beneath the constant stress  
Of a solemn thoughtfulness,  
Weighing whither this life tends,  
For what high and holy ends  
It was lent us, whence it flows,  
And its current whither goes.

There is ample matter here  
For as much of thought and fear  
As will solemnize our souls—  
Thought of how this river rolls  
Over millions wrecked before  
They could reach that happy shore,

Where we have not anchored yet ;  
Of the dangers which beset  
Our own way, of hidden shoal,  
Waters smoothest where they roll  
Over point of sunken rock,  
Treacherous calm, and sudden shock  
Of the storm, which can assail  
No boat than ours more weak or frail—  
Matter not alone of sadness,  
But no less of thankful gladness,  
That, whichever way we turn,  
There are steady lights that burn  
On the shore, and lamps of love  
In the gloomiest sky above,  
Which will guide our bark aright  
Through the darkness of our night—  
Many a fixed unblinking star .  
Unto them that wandering are  
Through this blindly-weltering sea—  
Themes of high and thoughtful glee,  
When we think we are not left,  
Of all solaces bereft,  
Each to hold, companionless,  
Through a pathless wilderness,  
Unaccompanied our way,  
All forlorn ; this I may say,  
Whatsoever else betide,  
With thee sitting at my side,  
And this happy infant sweet,  
Playing, laughing at my feet.

## LINES

WRITTEN AT THE VILLAGE OF PASSIGNANO, ON THE LAKE OF  
THRASYMENE.

THE mountains stand about the quiet lake,  
That not a breath its azure calm may break ;  
No leaf of these sere olive-leaves is stirred ;  
In the near silence far-off sounds are heard ;  
The tiny bat is flitting over-head,  
The hawthorn doth its richest odours shed  
Into the dewy air ; and over all,  
Veil after veil, the evening shadows fall,  
Withdrawing one by one each glimmering height,  
The far, and then the nearer, from our sight—  
No sign surviving in this tranquil scene,  
That strife and savage tumult here have been.

But if the pilgrim to the latest plain  
Of carnage, where the blood like summer rain  
Fell but the other day—if in his mind  
He marvels much and oftentimes to find  
With what rare art has Nature each sad trace  
Of Man's red footmarks laboured to efface—  
What wonder, if this spot we tread appears  
Guiltless of strife, when now two thousand years  
Of daily reparation have gone by,  
Since it resumed its own tranquillity !  
This calm has nothing strange ; yet not the less  
This holy evening's solemn quietness,  
The perfect beauty of this windless lake,  
This stillness which no louder murmurs break  
Than the frogs croaking from the distant sedge,  
These vineyards drest unto the water's edge,

This hind that homeward driving the slow steer  
Tells how man's daily work goes forward here,  
Have each a power upon me, while I drink  
The influence of the placid time, and think  
How gladly that sweet Mother once again  
Resumes her sceptre and benignant reign,  
But for a few short instants scared away  
By the mad game, the cruel impious fray  
Of her distempered children—how comes back,  
And leads them in the customary track  
Of blessing once again ; to order brings  
Anew the dislocated frame of things,  
And covers up, and out of sight conceals  
What they have wrought of ill, or gently heals.

*TO ENGLAND.*

WRITTEN AFTER A VISIT TO SORRENTO.

THEY are but selfish visions at the best,  
Which tempt us to desire that we were free  
From the dear ties that bind us unto thee,  
That so we might take up our lasting rest,  
Where some delightful spot, some hidden nest  
In brighter lands has pleased our phantasy :  
And might such vows at once accomplished be,  
We should not in the accomplishment be blest,  
But oh ! most miserable, if it be true  
Peace only waits upon us, while we do  
Heaven's work and will : for what is it we ask,  
When we would fain have leave to linger here,  
But to abandon our appointed task,  
Our place of duty and our natural sphere ?

## *SORRENTO.*

A FRAGMENT.

F AIR fountains of man's art were there,  
Streams trickling down from stair to stair,  
And as, with lapse just audible,  
From font to font the waters fell,  
Around the lighted bubbles flew,  
Starring the leaves with points like dew :  
For tender myrtles near were set,  
That in this happy clime had met  
Unhoused the winter's deadliest air ;  
And the pale lemon-flower was there,  
And the dark glittering leaves behind  
The fruit with its discoloured rind :  
While the long groves of orange made  
A screen sun-proof, an ample shade,  
With spacious avenues below,  
Where one might wander to and fro,  
Watching the little runnels creep  
Round every root, and duly steep  
With freshness all the thirsty soil ;  
Or lift a hand for easiest spoil,  
And of the golden fruitage share,  
Cool-hanging in the morning air.



## *VESUVIUS.*

(AS SEEN FROM CAPRI.)

A WREATH of light blue vapour, pure and rare,  
Mounts, scarcely seen against the bluer sky,  
In quiet adoration, silently—  
Till the faint currents of the upper air  
Dislimn it, and it forms, dissolving there,  
The dome, as of a palace, hung on high  
Over the mountain ; underneath it lie  
Vineyards and bays and cities white and fair.  
Might we not think this beauty would engage  
All living things unto one pure delight ?  
Oh vain belief ! for here our records tell,  
Rome's understanding tyrant from men's sight  
Hid, as within a guilty citadel,  
The shame of his dishonourable age.

## *VESUVIUS.*

AS when unto a mother, having chid  
Her child in anger, there have straight ensued  
Repentings for her quick and angry mood,  
Till she would fain see all its traces hid  
Quite out of sight—even so has Nature bid  
Fair flowers, that on the scarred earth she has strewed,  
To blossom, and called up the taller wood  
To cover what she ruined and undid.  
Oh ! and her mood of anger did not last  
More than an instant ; but her work of peace,  
Restoring and repairing, comforting  
The earth, her stricken child, will never cease ;  
For that was her strange work, and quickly past,  
To this her genial toil no end the years shall bring.

## THE SAME.

CONTINUED.

THAT her destroying fury was with noise  
And sudden uproar ; but far otherwise,  
With silent and with secret ministries,  
Her skill of renovation she employs :  
For Nature, only loud when she destroys,  
Is silent when she fashions : she will crowd  
The work of her destruction, transient, loud,  
Into an hour, and then long peace enjoys.  
Yea, every power that fashions and upholds  
Works silently ; all things whose life is sure,  
Their life is calm ; silent the light that moulds  
And colours all things ; and without debate  
The stars, which are for ever to endure,  
Assume their thrones and their unquestioned state.

## ON THE PERSEUS AND MEDUSA

OF BENVENUTO CELLINI, AT FLORENCE.

IN what fierce spasms upgathered, on the plain  
Medusa's headless corpse has quivering sunk,  
While all the limbs of that undying trunk  
To their extremest joint with torture strain ;  
But the calm visage has resumed again  
Its beauty,—the orb'd eyelids are let down,  
As though a living sleep might once more crown  
Their placid circlets, guiltless of all pain.  
And thou—is thine the spirit's swift recoil,  
Which follows every deed of acted wrath,  
That, holding in thine hand this loveliest spoil,  
Thou dost not triumph, feeling that the breath  
Of life is sacred, whether it inform,  
Loathly or beauteous, man or beast or worm ?

## LINES

WRITTEN AFTER HEARING SOME BEAUTIFUL SINGING IN A  
CONVENT CHURCH AT ROME.

SWEET voices ! seldom mortal ear  
Strains of such potency might hear ;  
My soul that listened seemed quite gone,  
Dissolved in sweetness, and anon  
I was borne upward, till I trod  
Among the hierarchy of God.  
And when they ceased, as time must bring  
An end to every sweetest thing,  
With what reluctancy came back  
My spirits to their wonted track,  
And how I loathed the common life,  
The daily and recurring strife  
With petty sins, the lowly road,  
And being's ordinary load.  
—Why, after such a solemn mood  
Should any meaner thought intrude ?  
Why will not heaven hereafter give,  
That we for evermore may live  
Thus at our spirit's topmost bent ?  
So asked I in my discontent.

But give me, Lord, a wiser heart ;  
These seasons come, and they depart,  
These seasons, and those higher still,  
When we are given to have our fill  
Of strength and life and joy with Thee,  
And brightness of thy face to see.  
They come, or we could never guess  
Of heaven's sublimer blessedness ;

They come, to be our strength and cheer  
In other times, in doubt or fear,  
Or should our solitary way  
Lie through the desert many a day.  
They go, they leave us blank and dead,  
That we may learn, when they are fled,  
We are but vapours which have won  
A moment's brightness from the sun,  
And which it may at pleasure fill  
With splendour, or unclothe at will.  
Well for us they do not abide,  
Or we should lose ourselves in pride,  
And be as angels—but as they  
Who on the battlements of day  
Walked, gazing on their power and might,  
Till they grew giddy in their height.

Then welcome every nobler time,  
When out of reach of earth's dull chime  
'Tis ours to drink with purg'd ears  
The music of the solemn spheres,  
Or in the desert to have sight  
Of those enchanted cities bright,  
Which sensual eye can never see :  
Thrice welcome may such seasons be :  
But welcome too the common way,  
The lowly duties of the day,  
And all which makes and keeps us low,  
Which teaches us ourselves to know,  
That we who do our lineage high  
Draw from beyond the starry sky,  
Are yet upon the other side  
To earth and to its dust allied.

*A VISIT TO TUSCULUM.*

A SOLEMN thing it is, and full of awe,  
Wandering long time among the lonely hills,  
To issue on a sudden 'mid the wrecks  
Of some fall'n city, as might seem a coast  
From which the tide of life has ebbed away,  
Leaving bare sea-marks only. Such there lie  
Among the Alban mountains—Tusculum,  
Or Palestrina with Cyclopean walls  
Enormous : and this solemn awe we felt  
And knew this morning, when we stood among  
What of that first-named city yet survives.

For we had wandered long among those hills,  
Watching the white goats on precipitous heights,  
Half-hid among the bushes, or their young  
Tending new-yearned : and we had paused to hear  
The deep-toned music of the convent bells,  
And wound through many a verdant forest path,  
Gathering the crocus and anemone,  
With that fresh gladness, which when flowers are new  
In the first spring, they bring us ; till at last  
We issued out upon an eminence,  
Commanding prospect large on every side,—  
But largest where the world's great City lay  
Whose features, undistinguishable now,  
Allowed no recognition, save where the eye  
Could mark the white front of the Lateran  
Facing this way, or rested on the dome,  
The broad stupendous dome, high over all.  
And as a sea around an island's roots  
Spreads, so the level champaign every way

Stretched round the City, level all, and green  
With the new vegetation of the spring ;  
Nor by the summer ardours scorched as yet,  
Which shot from southern suns, too soon dry up  
The beauty and the freshness of the plains ;  
While to the right the ridge of Apennine,  
Its higher farther summits all snow-crowned,  
Rose, with white clouds above them, as might seem  
Another range of more aërial hills.

These things were at a distance, but more near  
And at our feet signs of the tide of life,  
That once was here, and now had ebbed away—  
Pavements entire, without one stone displaced,  
Where yet there had not rolled a chariot wheel  
For many hundred years ; rich cornices,  
Elaborate friezes of rare workmanship,  
And broken shafts of columns, that along  
This highway side lay prone ; vaults that were rooms  
And hollowed from the turf, and cased in stone,  
Seats and gradations of a theatre,  
Which, emptied of its population now,  
Shall never be refilled : and all these things,  
Memorials of the busy life of man,  
Or of his ample means for pomp and pride,  
Scattered among the solitary hills,  
And lying open to the sun and showers,  
And only visited at intervals  
By wandering herds, or pilgrims like ourselves  
From distant lands ; with now no signs of life,  
Save where the goldfinch built his shallow nest  
'Mid the low bushes, or where timidly  
The rapid lizard glanced between the stones—  
All saying that the fashion of this world  
Passes away : that not Philosophy

Nor Eloquence can guard their dearest haunts  
From the rude touch of desecrating time.  
What marvel, when the very fanes of God,  
The outward temples of the Holy One,  
Claim no exemption from the general doom,  
But lie in ruinous heaps ; when nothing stands,  
Nor may endure to the end, except alone  
The spiritual temple built with living stones ?

*GIBRALTAR.*

ENGLAND, we love thee better than we know—  
And this I learned, when after wanderings long  
'Mid people of another stock and tongue;  
I heard again thy martial music blow,  
And saw thy gallant children to and fro  
Pace, keeping ward at one of those huge gates,  
'Twin giants watching the Herculean Straits.  
When first I came in sight of that brave show,  
It made my very heart within me dance,  
To think that thou thy proud foot shouldst advance  
Forward so far into the mighty sea ;  
Joy was it and exultation to behold  
Thine ancient standard's rich emblazonry,  
A glorious picture by the wind unrolled

*ON A PICTURE AT MADRID.*

BY MURILLO.

WITH what calm power thou risest on the wind ;  
Mak'st thou a pinion of those locks unshorn ?  
Or of that dark blue robe which floats behind  
In ample folds? or art thou cloud-upborne?

A crescent moon is bent beneath thy feet,  
Above the heavens expand, and tier o'er tier  
With heavenly garlands thy advance to greet,  
The cloudy throng of cherubim appear.

There is a glory round thee, and mine eyes  
Are dazzled, for I know not whence it came,  
Since never in the light of western skies  
The island-clouds burned with so pure a flame :

Nor were those flowers of our dull common mould,  
But nurtured on some amaranthine bed,  
Nearer the sun, remote from storms and cold,  
By purer dews and warmer breezes fed.

Well may we be perplexed and sadly wrought,  
That we can guess so ill what dreams were thine,  
Ere from the chambers of thy silent thought  
That face looked out on thee, Painter divine.

What innocence, what love, what loveliness,  
What purity must have familiar been  
Unto thy soul, before it could express  
The holy beauty in that visage seen !

And so, if we would understand thee right,  
And the diviner portion of thine art,  
We must exalt our spirits to thine height,  
Nor wilt thou else the mystery impart.



*A LEGEND OF ALHAMBRA.*

O HYMNED in many a poet's strain,  
Alhambra, by enchanter's hand  
Exalted on this throne of Spain,  
A marvel of the land ;

The last of thy imperial race,  
Alhambra, when he overstept  
Thy portal's threshold, turned his face,  
He turned his face and wept.

In sooth it was a thing to weep,  
If then, as now, the level plain  
Beneath was spreading like the deep,  
The broad unruffled main :

If, like a watch-tower of the sun,  
Above the Alpujarras rose,  
Streaked, when the dying day was done,  
With evening's roseate snows.

Thy founts yet make a pleasant sound,  
And the twelve lions, couchant yet,  
Sustain their ponderous burden, round  
The marble basin set.

But never, when the moon is bright  
O'er hill and golden-sanded stream,  
And thy square turrets in the light  
And taper columns gleam,

Will village maiden dare to fill  
Her pitcher from that basin wide,  
But rather seeks a niggard rill  
Far down the steep hill-side !

It was an Andalusian maid,  
With rose and pink-enwoven hair,  
Who told me what the fear that stayed  
Their footsteps from that stair :

How, rising from that watery floor,  
A Moorish maiden, in the gleam  
Of the wan moonlight, stands before  
The stirrer of the stream :

And mournfully she begs the grace,  
That they would speak the words divine,  
And, sprinkling water in her face,  
Would make the sacred sign.

And whosoe'er will grant this boon,  
Returning with the morrow's light,  
Shall find the fountain-pavement strewn  
With gold and jewels bright :

A regal gift ! for once, they say,  
Her father ruled this broad domain,  
The last who kept beneath his sway  
This pleasant place of Spain.

It surely is a fearful doom,  
That one so beautiful should have  
No present quiet in her tomb,  
No hope beyond the grave.

It must be that some amulet  
Doth make all human pity vain,  
Or that upon her brow is set  
The silent seal of pain,

Which none can meet—else long ago,  
    Since many gentle hearts are there,  
Some spirit, touched by joy or woe,  
    Had answered to her prayer.

But so it is, that till this hour  
    That mournful child beneath the moon  
Still rises from her watery bower,  
    To urge this simple boon—

To beg, as all have need of grace,  
    That they would speak the words divine,  
And, sprinkling water in her face,  
    Would make the sacred sign.

SONNET.

IT may be that our homeward longings made  
    That other lands were judged with partial eyes ;  
But fairer in my sight the mottled skies,  
With pleasant interchange of sun and shade,  
And more desired the meadow and deep glade  
Of sylvan England, green with frequent showers,  
Than all the beauty which the vaunted bowers  
Of the parched South have in mine eyes displayed ;  
Fairer and more desired !—this well might be,  
For let the South have beauty's utmost dower,  
And yet my heart might well have turned to thee,  
My home, my country, when a delicate flower  
Within thy pleasant borders was for me  
Tended, and growing up through sun and shower.

*RECOLLECTIONS OF BURGOS.*

MOST like some agèd king it seemed to me,  
Who had survived his old regality,  
Poor and deposed, but keeping still his state  
In all he had before of truly great ;  
With no vain wishes and no vain lament,  
But his enforcèd leisure well content  
To soothe with meditation, books and prayer :  
For all was sober and majestic there—  
The old Castilian, with close finger tips  
Pressing his folded mantle to his lips ;  
The dim cathedral's cross-surmounted pile,  
With carved recess, and cool and shadowy aisle,  
The walks of poplar by the river's side,  
That wound by many a straggling channel wide ;  
And seats of stone, where one might sit and weave  
Visions, till well-nigh tempted to believe  
That life had few things better to be done,  
And many worse, than sitting in the sun  
To lose the hours, and wilfully to dim  
Our half-shut eyes, and veil them till might swim  
The pageant by us, smoothly as the stream  
And unremembered pageant of a dream.

A castle crowned a neighbouring hillock's crest,  
But now the moat was level with the rest ;  
And all was fallen of this place of power,  
All heaped with formless stone, save one round tower  
And here and there a gateway low and old,  
Figured with antique shape of warrior bold.  
And then behind this eminence the sun  
Would drop serenely, long ere day was done ;  
And one who climbed that height, might see again  
A second setting o'er the fertile plain  
Beyond the town, and glittering in his beam,  
Wind far away that poplar-skirted stream.

*A LEGEND OF TOLEDO.*

FAR down below the Christian captives pine  
In dungeon depths, and whoso dares to bring  
Assuagements for their wounds, or food, or wine,  
Must brave the fiercest vengeance of the king.

Richly is spread above the royal board,  
The palace windows blaze with festal light,  
And many a lady, many a Moorish lord,  
The morning's triumph celebrate at night.

But could they all without remorse or fear  
Feast, as although on earth were to be found  
No hunger to appease, no want to cheer,  
No dark and hopeless places underground?

Neither of knight or captain is it told  
That he was shamed at heart to do this thing  
One only was there, pitiful and bold—  
A maiden, daughter of this impious king.

Three times the beauteous messenger of grace  
She, passing to the dungeon from the hall,  
Shone like an angel in that gloomy place,  
And brought relief to some, and hope to all.

But envious eyes were on her, and her sire,  
Upon her way encountering unawares  
Her passing thither the fourth time, in ire  
Bid show what hidden in her lap she bears.

Thus, willing to condemn her in the sight  
Of all, he spake : she tremblingly obeyed,  
When, if old legends speak the truth aright,  
Flowers filled her lap,—these only it displayed :

Roses and pinks and lilies there were found,  
Marvel to her and them who saw the same ;  
All sweetest flowers that grow from earthly ground,  
But nothing that might bring rebuke or blame.

Whate'er is sown in love—the lowliest deed—  
Shall bloom and be a flower in Paradise ;  
Yet springs not often from that precious seed  
Harvest so prompt as this before our eyes.

But afterward how rescued from the court,  
And from a faith which cannot save or bless,  
To far-off hermitage she made resort,  
A saintly dweller in the wilderness,

Her story, pictured on a cloister wall  
In old Toledo, gives us not to know :  
This only there appears, and this is all  
We need to ask, whether of weal or woe—

That unto her who was in mercy bold,  
Was given the knowledge of a faith divine :  
For there in death we see her, and her hold  
Is on the Cross, salvation's bless'd sign.

*AN INCIDENT VERSIFIED.*

FAR in the south there is a jutting ledge  
Of rocks, scarce peering o'er the water's edge,  
Where earliest come the fresh Atlantic gales,  
That in their course have filled a thousand sails,  
And brushed for leagues and leagues the Atlantic deep,  
Till now they make the nimble spirit leap  
Beneath their lifeful and renewing breath,  
And stir it like the ocean depths beneath.  
Two that were strangers to that sunny land,  
And to each other, met upon this strand ;  
One seemed to keep so slight a hold of life,  
That when he willed, without the spirit's strife,  
He might let go—not as sometimes we see  
Lean o'er a precipice an aged tree,  
Whose gnarl'd roots grow barer day by day,  
For aye the strong rains falling wash away  
Some portion of the black and scanty mould  
That clung around them ; yet they keep their hold,  
And like a dead man's fingers seem to clasp  
The bare earth with an agonizing grasp—  
He rather was a flower upon a ledge  
Of verdant meadow by a river's edge,  
Which softly loosens with its treacherous flow  
In gradual lapse the moistened soil below ;  
While to the last in beauty and in bloom  
That flower is scattering incense o'er its tomb,  
And with the dews upon it, and the breath  
Of the fresh morning round it, sinks to death.  
They met the following day, and many more  
They paced together this low ridge of shore,  
Till one fair eve, the other with intent  
To lure him out, unto his chamber went ;

But straight retired again with noiseless pace,  
For with a subtle gauze flung o'er his face  
Upon his bed he lay, serene and still  
And quiet, even as one who takes his fill  
Of a delight he does not fear to lose.  
So blest he seemed, the other could not choose  
To wake him, but went down the narrow stair ;  
And when he met an aged attendant there,  
She ceased her work to tell him, when he said,  
Her patient then on happy slumber fed,  
But that anon he would return once more,—  
Her inmate had expired an hour before.

I know not by what chance he thus was thrown  
On a far shore, untended and alone,  
To live or die ; for as I after learned,  
There were in England many hearts that yearned  
To know his safety, and such tears were shed  
For him as grace the living and the dead.

### SONNET.

THE commonest spot we cannot without pain  
Turn from, where we have tarried but a day,  
And struck no roots, when to our hearts we say,  
We ne'er shall look upon this spot again ;  
What wonder then if I can not restrain  
Some sadness, turning from these haunts away,  
Where we have many a month been free to stray  
By verdant stream, o'er hill or pleasant plain—  
A momentary sadness, yet which brings  
Thanksgiving with it, gratitude for this,  
That where we live, we cannot choose but love ;  
We make a friend of nature, until bliss  
(Few guess how much), we daily, hourly prove  
From the known aspect of familiar things.



## ON LEAVING ROME.

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND RESIDING IN THAT CITY.

O LATELY written in the roll of friends,  
O written late, not last, three happy months  
Under the shadow of the Capitol,  
A pleasant time, made pleasanter by thee,  
It has been mine to live—three months of spring,  
Which pleasant in themselves and for thy sake,  
Had yet this higher, that they stirred in the heart  
The motions of continual thankfulness  
For me, considering by what gracious paths  
I had been guided, by what paths of love,  
Since I was last a dweller in these gates.  
That meditation could not prove to me  
But as a spring that ever bubbles up,  
Sparkling in the face of heaven, while every day  
Reminded me how little of delight  
I gathered from this wondrous city then,  
But what a rare and ample gladness now.

For though not then indifferent to me  
Nature or Art, yea rather though from these  
I drew whatever lightened for a while  
Life's burden and intolerable load ;  
Yet seldom could I gather heart enough,  
With all their marvels round me, to go forth  
In quest of any. But some lonely spot,  
Some ridge of ruin fringed with cypresses,  
Such as have everywhere so loved to make  
Their chosen home, more than all other trees,  
'Mid the fall'n structures of imperial Rome,  
Me did such haunt please better ; or I loved,

With others whom a like disquietude,  
At the like crisis of their lives, now kept  
Restless, with them to question to and fro  
And to debate the evil of the world,  
As though we bore no portion of that ill,  
As though with subtle phrases we could spin  
A woof to screen us from life's undelight :  
Sometimes prolonging far into the night  
Such talk, as loth to separate, and find  
Each in his solitude how vain are words,  
When that which is opposed to them is more.

I would not live that time again for worlds,  
Full of rebellious askings, for what end,  
And by what power, without our own consent,  
Caught in this snare of life we knew not how,  
We were placed here, to suffer and to sin,  
To be in misery and know not why.  
Yet so it fared with me, a sojourner,  
Five years ago, beneath these mouldering walls,  
As I am now ; and, trusted friend, to thee  
I have not doubted to reveal my soul,  
For thou hast known, if I may read aright  
The pages of thy past existence, thou  
Hast known the dreary sickness of the soul,  
Which falls upon us in our lonely youth,  
The fear of all bright visions leaving us,  
The sense of emptiness, without the sense  
Of an abiding fulness anywhere ;  
When all the generations of mankind,  
With all their purposes, their hopes and fears,  
Seem nothing truer than those wandering shapes  
Cast by a trick of light upon a wall,  
And nothing different from these, except  
In their capacity for suffering ;—  
That fearful moment of our youth, when first

We have the sense of sin, and none as yet  
Of expiation. Our own life seemed then  
But as an arrow flying in the dark  
Without an aim ; a most unwelcome gift,  
Which we might not put by.

But now, what God  
Intended as a blessing and a boon  
We have received as such ; and we can say  
A solemn yet a joyful thing is life,  
Which being full of duties, is for this  
Of gladness full, and full of lofty hopes.  
And He has taught us what reply to make  
Or secretly in spirit, or in words,  
If there be need, when sorrowing men complain  
The fair illusions of their youth depart,  
All things are going from them, and to-day  
Is emptier of delights than yesterday,  
Even as to-morrow will be barer yet ;  
We have been taught to feel this need not be,  
This is not life's inevitable law,—  
But that the gladness we are called to know,  
Is an increasing gladness ; that the soil  
Of the human heart, tilled rightly, will become  
Richer and deeper, fitter to bear fruit  
Of an immortal growth, from day to day,  
Fruit of love, life, and indeficient joy.

Oh ! not for baneful self-complacency,  
Not for the setting up our present selves  
To triumph o'er our past (worst pride of all),  
May we compare this present with that past ;  
But to provoke renewed acknowledgments,  
But to incite unto an earnest hope  
For all our brethren. And how should I fear  
To own to thee that this is in my heart,  
This longing—that it leads me home to-day,

Glad even while I turn my back on Rome,  
Yet half unseen—its arts, its memories,  
Its glorious fellowship of living men ;  
Glad in the hope to tread the soil again  
Of England, where our place of duty lies :—  
Yet not as though we deemed we could do much,  
Or claimed large sphere of action for ourselves ;  
Not in this thought—since rather be it ours,  
Both thine and mine, to ask for that calm frame  
Of spirit, in which we know and deeply feel  
How little is the most which we can do,  
Yet leave not so that little unfulfilled.

### RETURNING HOME.

TO leave unseen so many a glorious sight,  
To leave so many lands unvisited,  
To leave so many worthiest books unread,  
Unrealized so many visions bright ;—  
Oh ! wretched yet inevitable spite  
Of our brief span, that we must yield our breath,  
And wrap us in the unfeeling coil of death,  
So much remaining of unproved delight.  
But hush, my soul, and vain regrets, be stilled ;  
Find rest in Him who is the complement  
Of whatsoe'er transcends our mortal doom,  
Of baffled hope and unfulfilled intent ;  
In the clear vision and aspect of whom  
All longings and all hopes shall be fulfilled.

## LINES.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF THE ADORATION OF THE MAGIAN

LITTLE pomp or earthly state  
On his lowly steps might wait ;  
Few the homages and small,  
That the guilty earth at all  
Was permitted to accord  
To her King and hidden Lord :  
Therefore do we set more store  
On these few, and prize them more :  
Dear to us for this account  
Is the glory of the Mount,  
When bright beams of light did spring  
Through the sackcloth covering,  
Rays of glory forced their way  
Through the vesture of decay,  
With which, as with a cloak, He had  
His divinest splendour clad :  
Dear the lavish ointment shed  
On his feet and sacred head ;  
And the high-raised hopes sublime,  
And the triumph of the time,  
When through Zion's streets the way  
Of her peaceful conqueror lay,  
Who, fulfilling ancient fame,  
Meek and with salvation came.

But of all this scanty state  
That upon his steps might wait,  
Dearest are these Eastern Kings,  
With their far-brought offerings.

From what region of the morn  
Are ye come, thus travel-worn,  
With those boxes pearl-embossed,  
Caskets rare and gifts of cost ?  
While your swart attendants wait  
At the stable's outer gate,  
And the camels lift their head  
High above the lowly shed ;  
Or are seen a long-drawn train,  
Winding down into the plain,  
From beyond the light-blue line  
Of the hills in distance fine.  
Dear for your own sake, whence are ye ?  
Dearer for the mystery  
That is round you ?—on what skies  
Gazing, saw you first arise  
Through the darkness that clear star  
Which has marshalled you so far,  
Even unto this strawy tent,  
Dancing up the Orient ?  
Shall we name you Kings indeed,  
Or is this an idle creed ?—  
Kings of Seba, with the gold  
And the incense long foretold ?  
Would the Gentile world by you  
First-fruits pay of tribute due ;  
Or have Israel's scattered race,  
From their unknown hiding-place,  
Sent to claim their part and right  
In the Child new-born to-night ?

But although we may not guess  
Of your lineage, not the less  
We the self-same gifts would bring,  
For a spiritual offering.

May the frankincense, in air  
As it climbs, instruct our prayer,  
That it ever upward tend,  
Ever struggle to ascend,  
Leaving earth, yet ere it go  
Fragrance rich diffuse below.  
As the myrrh is bitter-sweet,  
So in us may such things meet,  
As unto the mortal taste  
Bitter seeming, yet at last  
Shall to them who try be known  
To have sweetness of their own—  
Tears for sin, which sweeter far  
Than the world's mad laughers are ;  
Desires, that in their dying give  
Pain, but die that we may live.  
And the gold from Araby—  
Fitter symbol who could see  
Of the love, which, thrice refined,  
Love to God and to our kind,  
Duly tendered, He will call  
Choicest sacrifice of all ?

Thus so soon as, far apart  
From the proud world, in our heart,  
As in stable dark defiled,  
There is born the Eternal Child,  
May to Him the spirit's kings  
Yield their choicest offerings ;  
May Affections, Reason, Will,  
Wait upon Him to fulfil  
His behests, and early pay  
Homage to his natal day.

*TO SILVIO PELLICO.*

ON READING THE STORY OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

AH ! who may guess, that yet was never tried,  
How fearful the temptation to reply  
With wrong for wrong, yea fiercely to defy  
In spirit, even though action is denied ?  
Therefore praise waits on thee, not drawn aside  
By this strong lure of hell—on thee, whose eye  
Being formed by love, could everywhere descry  
Love, or some workings unto love allied.  
And benediction on the grace that dealt  
So with thy soul—and prayer, more earnest prayer,  
Intenser longing than before we felt  
For all that in dark places lying are,  
For captives in strange lands, for them who pine  
In depth of dungeon, or in sunless mine.

*TO THE SAME.*

SONGS of deliverance compassed thee about,  
Long ere thy prison doors were backward flung ;  
When first thy heart to gentle thoughts was strung,  
A song arose in heaven, an angel shout  
For one delivered from the hideous rout,  
Who with defiance and fierce mutual hate  
Do each the other's griefs exasperate.  
Thou, loving, from thy grief hadst taken out  
Its worst—for who is captive or a slave  
But he, who from that dungeon and foul grave,  
His own dark soul, refuses to come forth  
Into the light and liberty above ?  
Or whom may we call wretched on this earth  
Save only him who has left off to love ?



*TASSO'S DUNGEON, FERRARA.*

HOW might the goaded sufferer in this cell,  
With nothing upon which his eyes might fall,  
Except this vacant court, that dreary wall,  
How might he live? I asked. Here doomed to dwell,  
I marvel how at all he could repel  
Thoughts which to madness and despair would call.  
Enter this vault—the bare sight will appal  
Thy spirit, even as mine within me fell,—  
Until I learned that wall not always there  
Had stood—'twas something that this iron grate  
Had once looked out upon a garden fair.  
There must have been then here, to calm his brain,  
Green leaves, and flowers, and sunshine;—and a weight  
Fell from me, and my heart revived again.

*IN THE TYROL.*

NO village here so lowly, but hard by  
With its green cupola or tapering spire,  
Which sunset touches with innocuous fire,  
The little church appears, to sanctify  
The precincts duly where men live and die—  
A middle point, a link connecting well  
The earthly habitations where men dwell  
With ever-during mansions in the sky.  
Why must this fair sight aught but gladness breed  
Why must we ask, the while well satisfied  
Both eye and heart upon this prospect feed,—  
When shall we see arise on every side  
In our great cities populous and wide,  
Temples among us, answering our new need?

*AT BRUNECKEN, IN THE TYROL.*

THE men who for this earthly life would claim  
Well nigh the whole, and if the work of heaven  
Be relegated to one day in seven,  
Account the other six may without blame,  
Unsanctified by one diviner aim,  
To self, to mammon, and the world be given,  
They with their scanty worship might be driven,  
Were they but here, to profitable shame.  
This eve, the closing of no festal day,  
This common work-day eve, in the open street  
Seen have we groups of happy people meet,  
Putting for this their toil and tasks away,  
Men, women, boys, at one rude shrine to pray,  
And there their fervent litanies repeat.

*TO THE TYROLESE.*

NOT merely that in you was proved the might  
Of men, who standing on their native soil,  
Resolve it shall not be an easy spoil,  
Do I with triumph and with heart's delight  
Recall your deeds here done in hardy fight—  
Nor that ye caught the hunter in the toil,  
A miserable prey ! and made recoil  
The hosts of France with loss and hideous flight :  
But that ye teach a holier lesson still,  
But that in you and in your foe were showed  
The strength, the courage, the enduring will,  
The glory of the men who lean on God ;  
The blindness, the defeat, the panic fear  
Of them whose only trust is in their sword and spear.

## *A RECOLLECTION OF THE TYROL.*

TO —.

A LITTLE chapel by a dusty way,  
A holy precinct yielding silently  
Due admonition to each passer by,  
That in all times and places men should pray,  
And hallow like a sabbath every day—  
Even such an one now haunts my memory,  
One of the many that once pleased our eye,  
When those Tyrolian mountains round us lay.  
Companion of that journey and of life,  
If I forgot to make it then my prayer  
I make it now, that many such a shrine,  
Not far withdrawn, yet separate from the strife,  
The turmoil of the world, the haste, the care,  
Upon life's longer journey may be thine.

### *SONNET.*

IN A PASS OF BAVARIA BETWEEN THE WALCHEN AND THE  
WALDENSEE.

‘ His voice was as the sound of many waters ’

A SOUND of many waters !—now I know  
To what was likened the large utterance sent  
By Him who 'mid the golden lampads went :  
Innumerable streams, above, below,  
Some seen, some heard alone, with headlong flow  
Come rushing ; some with smooth and sheer descent,  
Some dashed to foam and whiteness, but all blent  
Into one mighty music. As I go,  
The tumult of a boundless gladness fills  
My bosom, and my spirit leaps and sings :  
Sounds and sights are there of the ancient hills,  
The eagle's cry, the mountain when it flings  
Mists from its brow ; but none of all these things  
Like the one voice of multitudinous rills.

*TO A LADY SINGING.*

I.

HOW like a swan, cleaving the azure sky,  
The voice upsoars of thy triumphant song,  
That whirled awhile resistlessly along  
By the great sweep of threatening harmony,  
Seemed, overmatched, to struggle helplessly  
With that impetuous music ; yet ere long  
Escaping from the current fierce and strong,  
Pierces the clear crystalline vault on high.  
And I too am upborne with thee together  
In circles ever narrowing, round and round,  
Over the clouds and sunshine—who erewhile,  
Like a blest bird of charmed summer weather  
In the blue shadow of some foamless isle,  
Was floating on the billows of sweet sound.

II.

When the mute voice returns from whence it came,  
The silence of a momentary awe,  
A brief submission to the eternal law  
Of beauty doth to every heart proclaim  
A Spirit has been summoned ; yea, the same  
Whose dwelling is the inmost human heart,  
Which will not from that home and haunt depart  
Which nothing can quite vanquish or make tame.  
It is the noblest gift beneath the moon,  
The power this awful presence to compel  
Out of the lurking places where it lies  
Deep hidden and removed from mortal eyes :  
Oh reverence thou in fear and cherish well  
This privilege of few, this rarest boon.

## III.

Look ! for a season (ah, too brief a space),  
While yet the spell is strong upon the rout,  
With something of still fear all move about,  
As though a breath or motion might displace  
The Spirit which had come of heavenly grace  
Among them, for a moment to redeem  
Their thoughts and passions from the selfish dream  
Of earthly life, and its inglorious race.  
If we might keep this awe upon us still,  
If we might walk for ever in the power  
And in the shadow of the mystery,  
Which has been spread around us at this hour,  
This might suffice to guard us from much ill,  
This might go far to keep us pure and free.

## IV.

But the spell fails, and of the many here,  
Who have been won to brief forgetfulness  
Of all that would degrade them and oppress,  
Who have been carried out of their dim sphere  
Of being to realms brighter and more clear,  
How few to-morrow will retain a trace,  
Which the world's business shall not soon efface,  
Of this high mood, this time of reverent fear.  
In these high raptures there is nothing sure,  
Nothing which we can rest on, to sustain  
The spirit long, or arm it to endure  
Against temptation, weariness, or pain ;  
And if they promise to preserve it pure  
From earthly taint, the promise is in vain.

## v.

Yet proof is here of men's unquenched desire  
 That the procession of their lives might be  
 More equable, majestic, pure and free ;  
 That there are times when all would fain aspire,  
 And gladly use the helps, to lift them higher,  
 Which music, poesy, or nature brings,  
 And think to mount upon these waxen wings,  
 Not deeming that their strength shall ever tire.  
 But who indeed shall his high flights sustain,  
 Who soar aloft and sink not ? He alone  
 Who has laid hold upon that golden chain  
 Of love, fast linked to God's eternal throne,—  
 The golden chain from heaven to earth let down,  
 That we might rise by it, nor fear to sink again.

---

NOT Thou from us, O Lord, but we  
 Withdraw ourselves from Thee.

When we are dark and dead,  
 And Thou art covered with a cloud,  
 Hanging before Thee, like a shroud,  
 So that our prayer can find no way,  
 Oh ! teach us that we do not say,  
 ' Where is *thy* brightness fled ? '

But that we search and try  
 What in ourselves has wrought this blame,  
 For Thou remainest still the same,  
 But earth's own vapours earth may fill  
 With darkness and thick clouds, while still  
 The sun is in the sky.

*SONNET.*

A COUNSELLOR well fitted to advise  
In daily life, and at whose lips no less  
Men may inquire or nations, when distress  
Of sudden doubtful danger may arise,  
Who, though his head be hidden in the skies,  
Plants his firm foot upon our common earth,  
Dealing with thoughts which everywhere have birth,—  
This is the poet, true of heart and wise :  
No dweller in a baseless world of dream,  
Which is not earth nor heaven : his words have past  
Into man's common thought and week-day phrase ;  
This is the poet, and his verse will last.  
Such was our Shakespeare once, and such doth seem  
One who redeems our later gloomier days.

*SONNET.*

ME rather may to tears unbidden move  
The meanest print that on a cottage wall  
Some ancient deed heroic doth recall,  
Or loving act of His, whose life was love,  
Than that my heart should be too proud to prove  
Emotions and sweet sympathies, until  
The magic of some mighty master's skill  
Calls hues and shapes of wonder from above :  
Since if we do no idle homage pay  
To what in art most beautiful is found,  
We shall have learned to feel in that same hour  
With man's most rude and most unskilled essay  
To win the beauty that is floating round  
Into abiding forms of grace and power.

## SONNET,

CONNECTED WITH THE FOREGOING.

YES, and not otherwise, if we in deed  
And with pure hearts are seeking what is fair  
In Nature, then, believe, we shall not need  
Long anxious quests, exploring earth and air,  
Ere we shall find wherewith our hearts to feed :  
The beauty that is scattered everywhere  
Will in our souls such deep contentment breed,  
We shall not pine for aught remote or rare.  
We shall not ask from some transcendant height  
To gaze on such rare scenes as may surpass  
Earth's common shows, ere we will own delight.  
We shall not need in quest of these to roam,  
While sunshine lies upon our English grass,  
And dewdrops glitter on green fields at home.

## ENGLAND.

PEACE, Freedom, Happiness, have loved to wait  
On the fair islands, fenced by circling seas ;  
And ever of such favoured spots as these  
Have the wise dreamers dreamed, who would create  
That perfect model of a happy state,  
Which the world never saw. Oceana,  
Utopia such, and Plato's isle that lay  
Westward of Gades and the Great Sea's gate.  
Dreams are they all, which yet have helped to make  
That underneath fair polities we dwell,  
Though marred in part by envy, faction, hate—  
Dreams which are dear, dear England, for thy sake,  
Who art indeed that sea-girt citadel,  
And nearest image of that perfect state.



## *THE ISLAND OF MADEIRA.*

THOUGH never axe until a later day  
Assailed thy forests' huge antiquity,  
Yet elder Fame had many tales of thee—  
Whether Phœnician shipman, far astray,  
Had brought uncertain notices away  
Of islands dreaming in the middle sea ;  
Or that man's heart, which struggles to be free  
From the old worn-out world, had never stay,  
Till, for a place to rest on, it had found  
A region out of ken, that happier isle,  
Which the mild ocean-breezes blow around ;  
Where they who thrice upon this mortal stage  
Had kept their hands from wrong, their hearts from guile,  
Should come at length, and live a tearless age.

*POLAND, 1831.*

THE nations may not be trod out, and quite  
Obliterated from the world's great page—  
The nations that have filled from age to age  
Their place in story. They who in despite  
Of this, a people's first and holiest right,  
In lust of unchecked power, or brutal rage,  
Against a people's life such warfare wage,  
With man no more, but with the Eternal fight.  
They who break down the barriers He hath set,  
Break down what would another time defend  
And shelter their own selves ; they who forget  
(For the indulgence of the present will)  
The lasting ordinances, in the end  
Will rue their work, when ill shall sanction ill.

*TO NICHOLAS, EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.*

ON HIS REPORTED CONDUCT TOWARDS THE POLES.

WHAT would it help to call thee what thou art?  
When all is spoken, thou remainest still  
With the same power and the same evil will  
To crush a nation's life out, to dispart  
All holiest ties, to turn awry and thwart  
All courses that kind nature keeps, to spill  
The blood of noblest veins, to maim, or kill  
With torture of slow pain the aching heart.  
When our weak hands hang useless, and we feel  
Deeds cannot be, who then would ease his breast  
With the impotence of words? But our appeal  
Is unto Him who counts a nation's tears,  
With whom are the oppressor and opprest,  
And vengeance, and the recompensing years.

*FRANCE, 1834.*

HOW long shall weary nations toil in blood,  
How often roll the still returning stone  
Up the sharp painful height, ere they will own  
That on the base of individual good,  
Of virtue, manners, and pure homes endued  
With household graces—that on this alone  
Shall social freedom stand—where these are gone,  
There is a nation doomed to servitude?  
O suffering, toiling France, thy toil is vain!  
The irreversible decree stands sure,  
Where men are selfish, covetous of gain,  
Heady and fierce, unholy and impure,  
Their toil is lost, and fruitless all their pain;  
They cannot build a work which shall endure.

*ODE TO SLEEP.*

I CANNOT veil mine eyelids from the light ;  
I cannot turn away  
From this insulting and importunate day,  
That momentarily grows fiercer and more bright,  
And wakes the hideous hum of monstrous flies  
In my vexed ear, and beats  
On the broad panes, and like a furnace heats  
The chamber of my rest, and bids me rise.

I cannot follow thy departing track,  
Nor tell in what far meadows, gentle Sleep,  
Thou art delaying. I would win thee back,  
Were mine some drowsy potion, or dull spell,  
Or charm'd girdle, mighty to compel  
Thy heavy grace ; for I have heard it said,  
Thou art no flatterer, that dost only keep  
In kingly haunts, leaving unvisited  
The poor man's lowlier shed ;  
And when the day is joyless, and its task  
Unprofitable, I were fain to ask,  
Why thou wilt give it such an ample space,  
Why thou wilt leave us such a weary scope  
For memory, and for that which men call hope.  
Nor wind in one embrace  
Sad eve and night forlorn  
And undelightful morn.

If with the joyous were thine only home,  
I would not so far wrong thee, as to ask  
This boon, or summon thee from happier task.  
But no,—for then thou wouldst too often roam,

And find no rest ; for me, I cannot tell  
What tearless lids there are, where thou mightst dwell :  
I know not any unenthralled of sorrow,  
I know not one, to whom this joyous morrow,  
So full of living motion new and bright,  
Will be a summons to secure delight.  
And thus I shall not wrong thee, though I claim  
Awhile thy presence.—O mysterious Sleep,  
Some call thee shadow of a mightier Name,  
And whisper how that nightly thou dost keep  
A roll and count for him.—  
Then be thou on my spirit like his presence dim.

Yet if my limbs were heavy with sweet toil,  
I had not needed to have wooed thy night,  
But till thy timely flight  
Had lain securely in thy peaceful coil ;  
Or if my heart were lighter, long ago  
Had crushed the dewy morn upon the sod,  
That darkened where I trod,  
As was my pleasure once, but now it is not so.

And therefore am I seeking to entwine  
A coronal of poppies for my head,  
Or wreath it with a wreath engarlanded  
By Lethe's slumberous waters. Oh ! that mine  
Were some dim chamber turning to the north,  
With latticed casement bedded deep in leaves,  
That opening with sweet murmur might look forth  
On quiet fields from broad o'erhanging eaves ;  
And ever when the Spring her garland weaves,  
Were darkened with encroaching ivy-trail  
And jagged vine-leaves' shade ;  
And all its pavement starred with blossoms pale  
Of jasmine, when the wind's least stir was made ;

Where the sunbeam was verdurous-cool, before  
It wound into that quiet nook, to paint  
With interspace of light and colour faint  
That tessellated floor.

How pleasant were it there in dim recess,  
In some close-curtained haunt of quietness,  
To hear no tones of human pain and care,  
Our own or others' ; little heeding there,  
If morn or noon or night  
Pursued their weary flight,  
But musing what an easy thing it were  
To mix our opiates in a larger cup,  
And drink, and not perceive  
Sleep deepening lead his truer kinsman up,  
Like undistinguished Night, darkening the skirts of  
Eve.

## SONNET.

WHAT is thy worship but a vain pretence,  
Spirit of beauty, and a servile trade,  
A poor and an unworthy traffic made  
With the most sacred gifts of soul and sense ;  
If they who tend thine altars, gathering thence  
No strength, no purity, may still remain  
Selfish and dark, and from life's sordid stain  
Find in their ministrations no defence ?  
—Thus many times I ask, when aught of mean  
Or sensual has been brought unto mine ear,  
Of them whose calling high is to inspire  
Eternal beauty in forms of human art—  
Vexed that my soul should ever moved have been  
By that which had such falsehood at the heart.

*ATLANTIS.*

I COULD loose my boat  
And could bid it float  
Where the idlest wind should pilot,  
So its glad course lay  
From this earth away,  
Toward any untrodden islet.

For this earth is old,  
And its heart is cold,  
And the palsy of age has bound it ;  
And my spirit frets  
For the viewless nets  
Which are hourly clinging round it.

And with joyful glee  
We have heard of thee,  
Thou Isle in mid-ocean sleeping ;  
And thy records old,  
Which the Sage has told  
How the Memphian tombs are keeping.

But we know not where,  
'Neath the desert air,  
To look for the pleasant places  
Of the youth of Time,  
Whose austerer prime  
The haunts of his childhood effaces.

Like the golden flowers  
Of the western bowers,  
Have waned their immortal shadows ;  
And no harp may tell  
Where the asphodel  
Clad in light those Elysian meadows.

And thou, fairest Isle  
In the daylight's smile,  
Hast thou sunk in the boiling ocean,  
While beyond thy strand  
Rose a mightier land  
From the wave in alternate motion ?

Are the isles that stud  
The Atlantic flood,  
But the peaks of thy tallest mountains,  
While repose below  
The great waters' flow  
Thy towns and thy towers and fountains ?

Have the Ocean powers  
Made their quiet bowers  
In thy fanes and thy dim recesses ?  
Or in haunts of thine  
Do the sea-maids twine  
Coral wreaths for their dewy tresses ?

Or does foot not fall  
In deserted hall,  
Choked with wrecks that ne'er won their haven,  
By the ebb trailed o'er  
Thy untrampled floor,  
Which their sunken wealth has paven ?

Oh, appear ! appear !  
 Not as when thy spear  
 Ruled as far as the broad Egean,  
 But in Love's own might,  
 And in Freedom's right,  
 Till the nations uplift their Pæan ;

Who now watch and weep,  
 And their vigil keep,  
 Till they faint for expectation ;  
 Till their dim eyes shape  
 Temple, tower, and cape,  
 From the cloud and the exhalation.

## SONNET.

I STOOD beside a pool, from whence ascended,  
 Mounting the cloudy platforms of the wind,  
 A stately heron ; its soaring I attended,  
 Till it grew dim, and I with watching blind—  
 When lo ! a shaft of arrowy light descended  
 Upon its darkness and its dim attire ;  
 It straightway kindled then, and was afire,  
 And with the unconsuming radiance blended.  
 And bird, a cloud, flecking the sunny air,  
 It had its golden dwelling 'mid the lightning  
 Of those empyreal domes, and it might there  
 Have dwelt for ever, glorified and bright'ning,  
 But that its wings were weak—so it became  
 A dusky speck again, that *was* a winged flame.



*TO A FRIEND.*

THOU that hast travelled far away,  
In lands beyond the sea,  
Wilt understand me, when I say  
What there has come to me.

In chambers dim thou wilt have wrought,  
With no one by to cheer,  
And trod the downward paths of thought  
In solitude and fear ;

Nor till the weary day was o'er,  
Into the air have fled  
From thought, which could delight no more,  
From books, whose power was dead ;

What time perchance the drooping day  
With burning vapours fills  
The deep recesses far away  
Of all the golden hills :

Or later, when the twilight blends  
All hues, or when the moon  
Into the ocean depths descends,  
A wavering column, down.

Then hast not thou in spirit leapt,  
Emerging from thy gloom,  
Like one who unawares o'erstept  
The barriers of a tomb :

And in thine exultation cried—  
Of gladness having fill,  
And in it being glorified—  
'The world is beauteous still !'

*THE CONSTITUTIONAL EXILES OF 1823.*

W<sup>I</sup>SE are ye in a wisdom vainly sought  
Through all the records of the historic page ;  
It is not to be learned by lengthened age,  
Scarce by deep musings of unaided thought.  
By suffering and endurance ye have bought  
A knowledge of the thousand links that bind  
The highest with the lowest of our kind,  
And how the indissoluble chain is wrought.  
Ye fell by your own mercy once :—beware,  
When your lots leap again from fortune's urn,  
A heavier error—to be pardoned less :  
Yours be it to the nations to declare  
That years of pain and disappointment turn  
Weak hearts to gall, but wise to gentleness.

1829.

*TO THE SAME.*

L<sup>I</sup>KE nightly watchers from a palace tower,  
In hope and faith and patience strong to wait  
The beacons on the heights, which should relate  
How some fenced city of deceit and power  
Had fallen—ye have stood for many an hour,  
Till your first hope's high movements must be dead,  
And if with new ye have not cheered and fed  
Your bosoms, dim despair may be your dower.  
Yet not for all—though yet no fire may crest  
The mountains, or light up their beacons sere—  
Your eminent commission so far wrong,  
Nor so much flatter the oppressors' rest,  
As to give o'er your watching, for so long  
As ye shall hope, 'tis reason they must fear.

1829.

## *DESPONDENCY.*

IT is a weary hill  
Of moving sand that still  
Shifts, struggle as we will,  
Beneath our tread :  
Of those who went before,  
And tracked the desert o'er,  
The footmarks are no more,  
But gone and fled.

We stray to either side,  
We wander far and wide,  
We fall to sleep and slide  
Far down again :  
As through the sand we wade,  
We do not seek to aid  
Our fellows, but upbraid  
Each other's pain.

I gaze on that bright band,  
Who on the summit stand,  
To order and command,  
Like stars on high :  
Yet with despairing pace  
My way I could retrace,  
Or on this desert place  
Sink down and die.

As we who toil and weep,  
And with our weeping steep  
The path o'er which we creep,  
They had not striven ;

They must have taken flight  
 To that serenest height,  
 And won it by the might  
 Of wings from heaven.

Alack ! I have no wing,  
 My spirit lacks that spring,  
 And Nature will not bring  
 Her help to me.  
 From her I have no aid,  
 But light-enwoven shade,  
 And stream and star upbraid  
 Our misery.

## SAIS.

A N awful statue, by a veil half-hid,  
 At Sais stands. One came, to whom was known  
 All lore committed to Etruscan stone,  
 And all strange voices which dull time has chid  
 To silence now, by antique pyramid,  
 Skirting the desert, heard ; and what the deep  
 May in its dimly-lighted chambers keep,  
 Where Genii groan beneath the seal-bound lid.  
 He dared to raise that yet unlifted veil  
 With hands not pure, but never might unfold  
 What there he saw ; madness, the shadow, fell  
 On his few days, ere yet he went to dwell  
 With night's eternal people, and his tale  
 Has thus remained, and will remain, untold.

## THE SPIRIT OF BEAUTY.

[FROM JUVENILIA.]

SPIRIT of Beauty, that wast sought of old,  
And won to incarnations manifold,  
By such as knew that, though like life and fair  
The forms they wrought, yet wert thou wanting there,  
All were but corpses, doomed to fall away  
From their first shape to formless swift decay ;  
Who therefore with strong prayer and earnest spell  
Strove to enforce thee in the shrines to dwell  
Which they were rearing, and built up before  
A heart's high altar, from all fields of lore  
Neglected or untrodden thereon heaping  
Rich odorous sweets, and patient vigil keeping  
With undiminished faith that in the end  
A quickening spark would on that heap descend —  
'Tis thou that giv'st whatever is its worth,  
Thou art the incense that doth sweeten earth,  
And thy outpouring, as of chancel wine,  
Can make the meanest goblet most divine :  
And though from marshy grounds low mists arise,  
And we ourselves would sometimes veil our eyes  
Against thee, still upon our fear and doubt  
And darkness thou persistest to look out,  
And smilest on our solitary need,  
Till we are reassured, and onward speed.

Yet looking out upon this life of ours,  
And all that would lay waste our pleasant bowers,  
Times are there when I could stand still in fear,  
Mute and almost expecting I should hear  
From hill and meadow, spring and waterfall,  
Oracular cave and forest, and from all

Of thine wherein we glory and rejoice  
And have our life, an universal voice  
As of departing Pan ; and thence this earth  
Should be as drear as some extinguished hearth,  
And we should wonder that the old delight,  
The triumph and traditionary might,  
Had passed from story and from ancient song,  
Which moved no more than some forgotten tongue,  
And from the face and from the voice of woman,  
And all things which are beautiful and human ;  
Not understanding that ourselves had wrought  
This desolation, this bereavement brought  
On us and ours. But oh ! if this belief  
Be but the mournful shaping of our grief,  
If in our heart of hearts thou yet dost dwell,  
Though in a foe-encompassed citadel,  
And from that fortress issuing wilt regain  
One day the limits of thine old domain,  
Gathering e'en now high hopes, which undefeated  
To their last ark of refuge have retreated,  
Oh let them bear thy banner, those who feel  
That only in thy service lies their weal,  
And that to flee thee is despair and woe,  
Though 'tis most hard to follow ; and who know  
That thee once seen we evermore must seek  
With love untiring, or thou else wilt wreak  
Worse than Diana's wrath on him who sees  
Thy beauty unattired, and after flees ;  
Nor wots he can be only at thy side  
And in thy recognition glorified.

## YOUNG POETS.

[FROM THE SAME.]

I COULD believe that unto such the world  
Is like an antique scroll, newly unfurled,  
And all o'erwrit with charactery strange,  
Whose very letters wax and wane and change ;  
And as by painful toil 'tis understood,  
Much evil is decyphered, little good,  
Strange dooms and destinies ; and for what is told  
In symbol mute and hieroglyphic old,  
They look abroad, and seek the counterpart,  
Vainly in nature, man, and their own heart,  
And are as lutes untuned ; yet meanwhile wake,  
As might a lute, though string by string should break,  
Tones of strange potency o'er all who know  
Or understand a shadow of their woe.  
But this must end ; and they their resting have  
In the secure sleep of the quiet grave,  
Or time interprets what was strange before,  
And Nature teaches them her holiest lore,  
And shows them in their art a golden key  
Unto the temple of her mystery ;  
Till, like magicians potent to compel  
The ministers that hate them to their spell,  
They reïnvoke and subject to their strain  
Even their own past disquietude and pain,  
Wresting from these the secret of their power,  
Till their own woe and weakness is a dower  
Of strength to others, and themselves have made  
Even of the loads which on their spirits weighed  
And bowed to earth, and would have crushed them there,  
Steps to ascend, and a majestic stair,  
Leading to platforms of intenser seeing,  
More ample prospect, and serener being.

## *THE HEALING OF THE WATERS.*

2 KINGS II. 19—22.

A BITTER barren-making stream  
The tears that flowed for sin,  
Till the great Prophet came, and cast  
Salt from the new cruise in.

Yet stanch'd he not the waters so—  
That they should flow no more :  
He healed their springs, then bid them run  
As freely as before :

He healed their source, and well has proved  
His word not given in vain,  
That now they never should bring death  
Nor barrenness again.

### *SONNET*

THE moments which we rescue and redeem  
From the bare desert and the waste of years,  
To fertilize, it may be with our tears,  
Yet so that for time after they shall teem  
With better than rank weeds, and wear a gleam  
Of visionary light, and on the wind  
Shed odours from the fields long left behind,  
These and their fruit to us can never seem  
Indifferent things ; and therefore do I look  
Not without gentle sadness upon thee,  
And liken thy outgoing, O my book,  
To the impatience of a little brook,  
Which might with flowers have lingered pleasantly,  
Yet toils to perish in the mighty sea.



*THE KINGDOM OF GOD.*

I SAY to thee, do thou repeat  
To the first man thou mayest meet  
In lane, highway, or open street—

That he and we and all men move  
Under a canopy of love,  
As broad as the blue sky above ;

That doubt and trouble, fear and pain  
And anguish, all are shadows vain,  
That death itself shall not remain ;

That weary deserts we may tread,  
A dreary labyrinth may thread,  
Through dark ways underground be led ;

Yet, if we will one Guide obey,  
The dreariest path, the darkest way  
Shall issue out in heavenly day ;

And we, on divers shores now cast,  
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,  
All in our Father's house at last.

And ere thou leave him, say thou this,  
Yet one word more—they only miss  
The winning of that final bliss,

Who will not count it true, that Love,  
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,  
And that in it we live and move.

And one thing further make him know,  
That to believe these things are so,  
This firm faith never to forego,

Despite of all which seems at strife  
With blessing, all with curses rife,  
That this *is* blessing, this *is* life.

---

SOME murmur, when their sky is clear  
And wholly bright to view,  
If one small speck of dark appear  
In their great heaven of blue :  
And some with thankful love are filled,  
If but one streak of light,  
One ray of God's good mercy gild  
The darkness of their night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,  
In discontent and pride,  
Why life is such a dreary task,  
And all good things denied :  
And hearts in poorest huts admire  
How Love has in their aid,  
Love that not ever seems to tire,  
Such rich provision made.

*ON AN EARLY DEATH.*

AH me ! of them from whom the good have hope,  
Of them whom virtue for her liegemen claims  
How many the world tames,  
That with its evil they quite cease to cope,  
And their first fealty sworn to beauty and truth  
Break early ; and amid their sinful youth  
Make shipwreck of all high and glorious aims.  
How few the fierce and fiery trial stand,  
To be as weapons tempered and approved  
For an Almighty hand ;  
How few of all the streamlets that were moved,  
Do ever unto clearness run again ;  
And therefore is it marvellous to us,  
When of these weapons one is broken thus,  
When of these fountains one would seem in vain  
Renewed in clearness, and is staunched before  
It has had leave to spread fresh streams the desert o'er.

Ah me ! that by so frail and slight a thread  
Our life is holden—that not life alone,  
But all that life has won  
May in one hour be gathered to the dead ;  
The slow additions that build up the mind,  
The skill that through temptation we have bought  
And suffering, and whatever has been taught  
By lengthened years and converse with our kind,  
That all may cease together ; and the tree  
Reared to its height by many a slow degree,  
And by the dews, the sunshine, and the showers  
Of many springs, an instant may lay low,  
With all its living towers,  
And all the fruit mature of growth and slow,  
Which on the trees of wisdom leisurely must grow.

Alas ! it is another thing to wail,  
That when the foremost runners sink and fail,  
They cannot pass their torch or forward place  
To them that are behind them in the race ;  
But their extinguished torches must be laid  
Together with them in the dust of death :  
That when the wise and the true-hearted fade,  
So little of themselves they can bequeath  
To us, who yet are in the race of life,  
For travail and for toil, for weariness and strife.

—But from behind the veil,  
Where they are entered who have gone before,  
A solemn voice arrests my feeble wail—  
And has thy life such worthier aims, O man,  
That thou shouldst grudge to give its little span  
To truth and knowledge, and faith's holy lore,  
Because the places for the exercise  
Of these may be withdrawn from mortal eyes ?  
Win truth, win goodness—for which man was made.  
And fear not thou of these to be bereft,  
Fear not that these shall in the dust be laid,  
Or in corruption left,  
Or be the grave-worm's food.  
Nothing is left or lost, nothing of good  
Or lovely ; but whatever its first springs  
Has drawn from God, returns to Him again ;  
That only which 'twere misery to retain  
Is taken from you, which to keep were loss ;  
Only the scum, the refuse, and the dross  
Are borne away unto the grave of things ;  
Meanwhile whatever gifts from heaven descend,  
Thither again have flowed,  
To the receptacle of all things good,  
From whom they come, and unto whom they tend,  
Who is the First and Last, the Author and the End.

Nor dare to sorrow with increase of grief,  
When they who go before  
Go furnished ; or because their span was brief,  
When in the acquist of what is life's true gage,  
Truth, knowledge, and that other worthiest lore,  
They had fulfilled already a long age.  
For doubt not but that in the worlds above  
There must be other offices of love,  
That other tasks and ministries there are,  
Since it is promised that his servants, there  
Shall serve Him still. Therefore be strong, be strong,  
Ye that remain, nor fruitlessly revolve,  
Darkling, the riddles which ye cannot solve,  
But do the works that unto you belong ;  
Believing that for every mystery,  
For all the death, the darkness, and the curse  
Of this dim universe,  
Needs a solution full of love must be :  
And that the way whereby ye may attain  
Nearest to this, is not through broodings vain,  
And half-rebellious, questionings of God,  
But by a patient seeking to fulfil  
The purpose of his everlasting will,  
Treading the path which lowly men have trod ;  
Since it is ever they who are too proud  
For this, that are the foremost and most loud  
To judge his hidden judgments, these are still  
The most perplexed and lost at his mysterious will.

## SABBATION.

A JEWISH LEGEND.

BY the dark mountains guarded well, and on the other side

Of Havila, for gold renowned, a land lies broad and wide  
Four-square it lies—a man at speed might travel every way,  
And would not pass from end to end until the ninetieth day.

The mountains with their barriers dark upon three sides  
enclose

This goodly land, but on the fourth a wondrous river flows ;  
Between whose banks no water rolls, but rush and roar  
along

Rocks, stones, and sand, together mixed, with tumult loud  
and strong ;

And higher than the houses' tops huge fragments leap and  
fly—

But on the holy seventh day it sleepeth quietly.

Sabbation is it therefore named, for on the Sabbath day,  
From eve till eve again comes back, that river sleeps  
always ;

Without a sound or slightest stir that day it doth remain,  
But then, the Sabbath done, returns unto its strength  
again—

So fierce that if in middle stream were set an adamant  
rock,

It would be shattered presently before the furious shock.  
By night a two days' journey off its rushing heard may be,  
Like thunder, like a mighty wind, or like the roaring sea.

Behind this river dwell secure the children of the race,  
Which had on Israel's mountains once their quiet resting-  
place ;

Till to the Assyrian for their sins delivered for a prey,  
Who from their soil uprooted them, and planted far away.

But they, when in that foreign land awhile they had  
remained,  
Said,—‘ Let us rise and seek some place by idols unpro-  
faned,  
Where we, by sore affliction taught, at length may under-  
stand,  
And keep the law we never kept while in our former land.’\*  
This counsel taking with themselves, and caring not for  
foes,  
And caring not for length of way, nor danger, they arose ;  
They rose together, and dryshod the great Euphrates  
passed,  
And ever journeying northward reached this goodly land  
at last—  
A goodly land, with all good things their old land knew,  
supplied,  
And all the plagues that vexed them there, for ever turned  
aside :  
A land of streams that fear no drought, that never fail to  
flow,  
Of wells not fed by scanty rains, but springing from below ;  
Where never upon sounding wing advance the locust  
swarm,  
To hide the noon-day sun, and bring to every green thing  
harm ;  
Where never from the desert blows the scorching fiery  
wind,  
That breathes o’er fields of flowers, and leaves a wilderness  
behind :  
The early and the latter rain their heavens ne’er refuse,  
And what the day burns up, the night repairs with copious  
dews.  
With their own hands they till the ground, and have of  
nothing lack ;  
The grain upon their furrows cast a hundredfold gives  
back,

\* See the apocryphal 2 Esdras iii. 13, 40—47.

And twice the cattle on their hills yield increase every  
year,

And trees that in no other land bear fruit, are laden here.  
Not readier on Engeddi's steeps the wounded balsam  
sheds

Its life's blood, and the Indian nard lifts here its spiky  
heads.

And gardens of delight are theirs ; and what is strange  
elsewhere

Of costly gum or fragrant spice, is counted common there ;  
No snake or scorpion, fox or dog, nor any beast unclean,  
Nor aught that can bring harm to man, through all the  
land is seen.

A little child will feed the flocks in forests far away,  
Not fearing man, nor evil beast, nor demon of noon-day.  
And theirs the ancient Hebrew tongue, the speech which  
angels love ;

And their true prayers in that are made, and always heard  
above—

Heard too in doleful worlds below, where at their hours  
of prayer

The anguish intermits awhile the hopeless misery there.  
And often when a man goes forth in lonely wilds to pray,  
An angel then will meet him there, and—Grace be with  
thee !—say ;

No child before his parents' eyes is laid on funeral bier,  
And none departs that has not reached his happy hun-  
dredth year ;

That has not at the least beheld his children's children  
rise

About his knees, to glad his heart and cheer his failing  
eyes.

Nor is the life then torn away by rude and painful death,  
But Gabriel with a gentle kiss draws out the flitting breath :  
And when the soul arrives at last in Paradise, there wait  
A crowd of ministering spirits there around its ruby gate ;



They put the sordid grave-clothes off, in raiment pure and  
white

They clothe him, glistening garments spun from glorious  
clouds of light ;

They set two crowns upon his head, of purest gold is one,  
The other diadem is wrought of pearl and precious stone :  
And giving myrtle in his hand, they praise him, and they  
say,

‘ Go in and eat thy bread henceforth with gladness every  
day.’

The day before a child is born, the angel, that is given  
To be his guide and guard through life, and lead him safe  
to heaven,

In spirit takes him where the Blest with light divine are  
fed,

Each sitting on his golden throne, his crown upon his  
head ;

‘ And these,’ he says, ‘ are they who loved the law of the  
Most High,

And such by his eternal grace come hither when they  
die :

Live thou and be an heir at length through mercy of this  
grace,

Since thou must for thy warning know there is another  
place.’

The angel carries then that soul at eventide to hell,  
Where the ungodly evermore in painful prison dwell.

‘ These wretched once, as thou wilt soon, the breath of  
life did draw,

And therefore be thou wise betimes, and keep and love  
the law.’

And if one see his brother sin, or hear him speaking  
vain

Or evil words, he leaves him not unchidden to remain,

But in just anger says to him, ' My brother, wilt thou know  
That sin upon our fathers brought God's wrath and all  
their woe?'

And thus doth each one each exhort, in righteousness and  
fear,

And with true hearts the righteous Lord to honour and  
revere.

And them, a people honouring Him, He honours in the  
sight

Of all their foes, exalting them to power and glorious  
might.

While they fear none, the fear of them on every land is  
shed,

That none of all the neighbouring folks dare stir them up  
for dread—

Well pleased if only they by them may unassailed remain,  
And princes far and near send gifts for their goodwill to  
gain ;

And five-and-twenty kings to them appointed tribute pay,  
And hands of strength upon the necks of all their foes  
they lay.

And when their Patriarch rideth forth for pleasure or for  
state,

A hundred thousand men or more on his outgoing wait ;  
A hundred thousand horsemen, all in glittering steel  
arrayed,

Whose trappings all are scarlet dyed, whose banners wide  
displayed.

At break of morning every day, the noblest of the land  
In pomp and solemn state ride forth, a high exulting band,  
As though to welcome and to greet and lead in triumph  
home

Some Royal Stranger, looked-for long, who now at length  
should come.

With some dejection on their brows at evening they  
return—

‘Why comes He not? why tarries He until another  
morn?’

But soon the shadow from their brows, the gloom has  
passed away ;

And that rejoicing troop goes forth upon the following  
day—

As high of hope, in all their state, they issue forth again,  
Sure that their high-raised hope will not prove evermore  
in vain ;

That He will one day come indeed, and with a mighty  
hand

Will lead them back to repossess their old, their glorious  
land.

### *TO THE EVENING STAR.*

SOLE star that glitterest in the crimson west,  
‘Fair child of beauty, glorious lamp of love,  
How cheerfully thou lookest from above,’  
With what unblinking eye and jocund crest.  
Yet grief from thee has passed into my breast,  
For all surpassing glory needs must be  
Full unto us of sad perplexity,  
Seen from this place of sin and sin’s unrest.  
Yea, all things which such perfect beauty own  
As this of thine is, tempt us unto tears ;  
For whether thou sole-sittest on thy throne,  
Or ledest choral dances of thy peers,  
Thou and all nature, saving man alone,  
Fulfil with music sweet your Maker’s ears.

*HONOR NEALE.*

A GRIEVOUS wrong it were, and treason done  
Unto the common heart of human kind,  
By which all live and love, to yield this thought  
Place for an instant, that because the griefs  
We tell of, are not high and stately woes,  
But simple sorrows, pangs of every day,—  
Or that because the hearts that owned those griefs  
Beat underneath low roofs of cottages,  
We therefore shall not win a listening ear ;  
And in this faith bold am I to relate  
The lowly history of a common grief,  
A sorrow in which high and low alike  
Have equal share, a mother's grief—and this  
In words as nearly as may be her own ;  
For while invention barren proves and old,  
Nature is rich and manifold and new.

But this much needful preface to her tale  
Let first find place. A little cottage girl  
Was Honor Neale ; and in the further west  
Of Ireland stood her parents' lowly hut :  
And there she was a learner for a while,  
As God's good hand had ordered, at a school  
Where the pure doctrine and the lore of Christ  
Were truly taught ; and there this little child,  
Though slow to learn yet rendered earnest heed  
To all she heard ; but after some short time,  
Before it could be known if that good seed  
Sown in her heart would put forth blade and ear,  
Her parents, whether of their own accord,

Or urged by some suggestion from without,  
Withdrew her, and she laboured in the fields  
Beside her father. 'Twas a late wet spring,  
And she, of weakly frame, could ill endure  
To carry heavy burdens on her back,  
As she was tasked to do, till many times  
She left her labour, and returning home  
Sat down and cried for weariness and pain ;  
But still her mother, thinking that she made  
More of her pains than need was, in the hope  
She might be suffered to return to school,  
Would sometimes ask her, had she then no mind  
To lend her father what small help she could,  
On whom the burden of a family  
Of many daughters with one only boy  
Pressed heavily—and then without a word  
She would return unto her work again.  
But soon she evidently grew too weak  
For toil, and soon too weak to leave the house.  
Three years her sickness lasted ; in which while,  
In a dark corner of the cottage sitting,  
Much in her reading she improved herself,  
And of her own accord she learnt by heart  
Some hymns, with which she solaced lonely hours ;  
But chiefly was delighted when they came  
To visit her, as now they often did,  
Who with a lively interest kept in mind  
This child, sometime a pupil in their care.  
But if through gracious teaching from on high,  
And through that lengthened discipline of pain,  
In spirit she grew fitter for her change,  
In body she grew weaker day by day ;  
And by degrees her pains had so increased,  
That when the tidings came that she was gone,  
What could they do, who knew what she endured,  
But render hearty thanks for her release ?

Willing to speak some comfort if they might  
Unto the sorrowing, willing too to learn  
How at the last it fared with this poor child,  
The friends of whom I speak, not many days  
After the tidings reached them of her death,  
Knocked at the cottage door yet once again.  
Much was the mother at their entrance moved ;  
For all the past, associated with them,  
Came to her mind ; but presently she spoke,  
And seemed to find much comfort and relief  
In talking freely of her child, and all  
Her sorrow into sympathizing ears  
Outpouring, and abruptly thus began—  
‘ For months before she died she slept with me,  
For I had pains and troubles of my own,  
Which would have kept me waking anyhow,  
And I was glad the others in the house,  
Who had been toiling hard the whole day long,  
And could enjoy sound sleep, should have their rest  
Unbroken. Often in the dark dark night,  
When all the house was quiet, she would say,  
If I had risen to move her in the bed  
More times than common, or to give her drink,  
“ Oh, mother, when you used to bid me do  
Things which I did not like, how many times  
I disobeyed you—I am much afraid  
I often vexed and grieved you at the heart.”  
“ No, Honor, you were always a good child,”  
I answered, and ’twas nothing more than truth.  
Ah, Sir, if she were sitting by my side,  
I should not now be praising her this way ;  
And it is rather I should grieve to think  
I did not show more tenderness to her.  
For, Honor, had I thought that you and I  
Would have to part so soon, I would have been  
Much kinder to you. She has lain awake

For hours together, then as if a thought  
Suddenly struck her,—“This is not the way  
I should be praying. Mother, lift me up,  
And set the pillow under my sore knee.”  
And then she has continued so, until  
Her head grew heavy, and she asked again  
To be set down. How often in the night,  
When all is quiet in the lonesome house,  
I now stretch out my hands and feel about  
Betwixt awake and sleeping, round the bed—  
For this now comes of course, and when my hands  
Find nothing, feeling round in emptiness,  
Oh then it is, or when the dreary light  
Of morning comes, my grief sits heaviest on me,  
As though my loss were but of yesterday,  
So that I scarce have strength to lift my hand,  
Or go about the needful work o’ the house.  
But as the day gets forward, what with tasks  
That must be done, and neighbours coming in,  
And pleasant light of the sun, and cheerful sounds,  
My heart grows somewhat lighter, till the weight  
Of all comes back at evening again.

The very day before she died, she said,  
“Dear mother, would you lift me in your arms,  
And carry me this once over the door,  
That I might look on the green fields again?”  
The day was cold and raw—and I refused,  
Till seeing that her mind was set on this,  
I wrapped the blanket round her safe and warm ;  
But when I took her in my arms, it went  
Unto my heart—I raised her with such ease !  
She had so pined and wasted, that her weight  
Was even as nothing ; but I bore her out  
Into the air, and carried her all round  
The clover field, and showed her everything ;

And as I brought her back she only said,  
Supposing I was wearied with her weight,  
"I never shall be asking this again."

And the last day, the morning that she died,  
She was as usual reading in the book  
Which had been given her when she quitted school :  
Ah ! Sir, I have forgotten most of what  
Was in that book ; but when I call to mind  
Its beautiful words, it makes me sad to think  
That there was no such learning in my time,  
For so I might be reading now myself  
The very words that I have heard her read,  
And maybe might find comfort for my grief ;  
I know at least that she found comfort there,  
'Twas that which made her happy at the last.  
For at the first, when first her pains began,  
She could not bear to think that she was dying,  
And would grow angry if a neighbour spoke  
As though her end was near : and the first time  
She was persuaded she could not recover,  
"Oh mother," she cried out in agony,  
"Where am I going ? Am I going where  
I never can come back to you again,  
And shall I not talk to you any more,  
And never sit beside you and look up  
Into your face, when you are suffering pain,  
And ask what ails you ?" Then she would at first  
Be at some times impatient in her pains,  
And then I could do nothing to her mind.  
But for the last months of her life she seemed  
To count that each thing was too good for her ;  
And any little service done to her,  
And every little present which was brought  
By a kind neighbour, was enough to make  
The thankful tears to come into her eyes.



In all your life you never could have seen  
One young or old so willing to depart,  
Nor yet so ready ; 'tis not I alone  
Say this, but one who had more right to know.

For 'twas about three weeks before the last,  
We saw that there was something on her mind,  
And questioning her, she answered that she wished  
To see the Priest, and to confess herself  
Once more before she died. He came at once,  
And was alone with her for near an hour :  
And when he just was standing at the door  
Ready to mount his horse, I heard him say  
Unto some neighbours that were standing by—  
“ I never saw a happier, holier child  
Than that is, ready to depart this world.”  
But then as he was taking his last leave,  
She fixed her eyes upon him with a look  
As though she had left something still unsaid.  
He asked her,—“ Is there anything, dear child,  
You have forgotten which you wish to tell?  
You need not fear to speak before them all.”  
“ Well, Sir,” she answered, “ I was thinking then,  
'Tis now about three years ago there lived  
A little orphan here, and she and I  
Were often sent into the fields together  
To tend the cows ; and when 'twas cold and wet  
I many times would run into the house,  
That I might ask my mother for some food,  
Or warm myself awhile, and did not care  
To leave her out alone in all the cold :  
I hoped I might have seen her before this,  
And have her pardon asked before she died,  
For that has ever since been on my mind,  
And during all my illness troubling me ;  
For had she had a mother of her own,

She would have gone to her as stout and bold  
As I to mine, and boldly asked of her  
All that she wanted." "You are a happy child,  
Dying this way, and grieving so your heart  
For such a little sin ;" and then he said,  
The Priest in all our hearing said, "I wish  
That I had died when I was of your age,  
So not to have more sin on me than yours  
To answer for :"—these were his very words.

But I was saying that the day she died  
She had been reading for some little time,  
And then complained her eyes were growing dim,  
And bade me wipe them. I was just then sweeping  
The hearth, and had made up our little fire ;  
But when I heard her speak this way, I knew  
What now was coming ; but I wiped her eyes  
As she desired—I knew it was no use,  
And presently she gave me back the book ;  
"For, mother dear," she said, "I cannot see  
To read a single word ;" and just as though  
She felt she would not want it any more,  
Bade me to place it carefully aside,  
And putting on the cover, set it by  
In the hand-basket. There was no one else  
In all the house, excepting she and me—  
The others all were gone unto their work.  
And now I knew the time was close at hand,  
Which had been drawing on for near three years.  
And presently I spoke to her again,  
And now she made no answer—only stretched  
Her hand out to me. I took hold of it,  
But in a moment let it go again,  
And lighting the twelve tapers held them there—  
It was a custom that my mother had,  
When one was dying—so I lighted them,

And being lighted, held them all myself,  
For there were none beside me in the house.  
But when I saw the breath was leaving her,  
I dropped them all, and by her side fell down,  
But soon recovering picked them up again,  
And held them there till they were all burned down,  
And as the last of them was going out  
She breathed at the same moment her last breath.

And she is gone, Sir,—but what matter now,  
What matter? She was but a little child,  
Yet Nature cannot choose but sometimes grieve,  
And must have way: why had it only been  
A stranger's child I had been rearing thus,  
And tending for now nearly fourteen years,  
My heart would needs be sad to let her go.  
But my own child, my darling Honoreen—  
Though when I think on all things, I believe  
That I am glad He took her to Himself;  
It may be I shall follow before long,  
For I am a poor weak creature that have seen  
Much toil and trouble. Blessed be His Name  
That took her first: if I had gone the first,  
And left her a poor cripple in the world,  
No doubt they would have all been kind to her;  
But who is like a mother?—even if they  
Had wished it most, they never could have done  
What I have done for her; and then at last  
She might have wearied all their patience out.  
Then blessings be upon His holy Name,  
Who called her out of this poor sinful world,  
And took her to Himself.

They buried her  
Down in the valley in the old churchyard,  
Beside the ruined church. I wished to go  
And see her laid within her little grave;

'Twould have been better for me, I believe,  
 If they had suffered me to go with them ;  
 But they were all against it, and that time  
 They might have had their way in anything.  
 But when I saw the little funeral  
 Wind down the field, I turned and shut the door,  
 And sitting on a stool I hid my face ;  
 I know not what it was came over me,  
 But I grew giddy, and fell down, and struck  
 My head against the corner of a chair,  
 And there has been a noise there ever since.

And now I thank you. Many a journey long  
 You took through wet and cold to see my child,  
 And she found much of comfort in your words ;  
 And at the last I think was better pleased  
 To go than stay. Then why should I so grieve ?  
 And why should I not rather feel and say,  
 'Twas the best nursing that I ever did,  
 To nurse her and to bring her up for Him,  
 Who called her to the knowledge of Himself,  
 Then took her out of this poor sinful world ?'

### *A CENTURY OF COUPLETS.*

TO halls of heavenly truth admission wouldst thou win,  
 Oft Knowledge stands without, while Love may  
 enter in.

Who praises God the most, what says he more than he  
 Who silent is ? yet who would therefore silent be ?

Thy treasures lodged so low, earth's damps will soon  
 consume :  
 While time is, lift them up into a higher room.

Lovingly to each other sun and moon give place,  
Else were the mighty heaven for them too narrow space.

Lodged in a ruinous hut, thou loathest to depart :  
Were thine a prouder house, 'twould prove a bitterer  
smart.

Only the waters which in perfect stillness lie,  
Give back an undistorted image of the sky.

Despise not little sins ; for mountain-high may stand  
The pil'd heap made up of smallest grains of sand.

Despise not little sins ; the gallant ship may sink,  
Though only drop by drop the watery tide it drink.

Thy soul is that fair bride which hell and heaven woo,  
And one perforce must win, to make or to undo.

Merely thyself, O man, thou canst not long abide,  
But presently for less or greater must decide.

God many a spiritual house has reared, but never one  
Where lowliness was not laid first, the corner-stone.

Owe no man aught save love ; but that esteem a debt,  
Which thou must ever pay, well pleased to owe it yet.

Rear highly as thou wilt thy branches in the air,  
But that thy roots descend as deep in earth have care.

Sin, not till it is left, will duly sinful seem ;  
A man must waken first, ere he can tell his dream.

Glad news were it to hear that thou shouldst never die ?  
Glad news that pain and sin should last eternally !

When thou art fain to trace a map of thine own heart,  
As undiscovered land set down the largest part.

Wouldst thou do harm, and still unharmed thyself  
abide?

None struck another yet, except through his own side.

God's dealings still are love ; his chastenings are alone  
Love now compelled to take an altered sterner tone.

From our ill-ordered hearts we oft are fain to roam,  
As men go forth who find unquietness at home.

Oh misery ! that man will not man's words receive,  
Nor, that the serpent stings, till stung himself, believe.

Why furnish with such care thy lodging of a night,  
And leave thy lasting home in such a naked plight?

Loved wilt thou be? then love by thee must first be  
given ;

No purchase-money else avails beneath the heaven.

When thou hast thanked thy God for every blessing sent,  
What time will then remain for plaint or discontent?

Envy detects the spots in the clear orb of light,  
And Love the little stars in the gloomiest saddest night.

Thou canst not choose but serve ; man's lot is servitude ;  
But this of choice thou hast, a bad lord or a good.

As from mine own sin more and farther I depart,  
Ah me ! my brother's sin will grow a bitterer smart.

One foe we have, who, cherished, rages with worse ire,  
Whom to give place to is like oil upon the fire.

Before the eyes of men let duly shine thy light,  
But ever let thy life's best part be out of sight.

My proud foe at my hands to take no boon will choose—  
—Thy prayers are that one gift which he cannot refuse.

Plead guilty at *man's* bar, and go to judgment straight ;  
At God's no other way remains to shun that fate.

As fish with poisoned baits, so pleasures soon are caught ;  
'Tis pity both should prove, so taken, good for nought.

We children are from earth weaned hardly, so Heaven  
    strews  
Some wormwood on earth's breasts, as tenderest mothers  
    use.

Wouldst thou go forth to bless, be sure of thine own  
    ground ;  
Fix well thy centre first, then draw thy circles round.

Sin may be clasped so close we cannot see her face,  
Nor seen nor loathed until held from us a small space.

Win lowliness of heart, and having won beware,  
And that thou grow not proud of lowliness have care.

Man is a star of heaven cast down upon the earth,  
A prince in beggar's weeds, half conscious of his birth.

The sun is in the heavens, on earth the sunshine bright,  
And we may close our eyes, but not put out the light.

Who plays a part, from shame shall not keep always clear  
Hard it is to *be* good, but harder to *appear*.

Their windows and their doors some close, and murmur-  
    ing say,  
The light of heaven ne'er found into my house a way.

How fearful is his case whom now God does not chide,  
When sinning worst ; to whom even chastening is denied !

When man against the powers above him dared rebel,  
His subjects learned from him the rebel's art as well.

God often would enrich, but finds not where to place  
His treasure, nor in hand nor heart a vacant space.

The man is happy, Lord, who love like this doth owe,  
Loves Thee, his friend in Thee, and for thy sake his foe.

If thou wouldst know sin's strength, thy lusts how hard  
to tame,  
Against them take up arms, and earnest war proclaim.

A dreamer do not wake, if, when his dream is fled,  
Thou canst not give him aught of better in its stead.

The oyster sickens while the pearl doth substance win :  
Thank God for pains that prove a noble growth within.

Some are resigned to go : might we such grace attain,  
That we should need our resignation to remain.

God's loudest threatenings speak of love and tenderest  
care,  
For who, that meant his blow to light, would cry, Beware

What is our work when God a blessing would impart ?  
To bring the empty vessel of a needy heart.

Can ever the true prayer of faith unheard remain ?  
Must not what came from God to Him return again ?

Oh leave to God at sight of sin *incensed* to be ;  
If thou art *grieved*, O man, that is enough for thee.



Till life is coming back, our death we do not feel ;  
Light must be entering in, our darkness to reveal.

Use thou, but love not things, given only with intent  
To be alleviations of thy banishment.

To lay thy soul's worst sins before thy Lord endure :  
Who will not show his hurts, can he expect a cure ?

Ill fares the child of heaven, who will not entertain  
On earth the stranger's grief, the exile's sense of pain.

Mark how there still has run, enwoven from above,  
Through thy life's darkest woof the golden thread of love.

Sin, like a serpent, where her head an entrance finds,  
Easily her whole length of body after winds.

What is thy fear, O soul ? the fear of that dark place,  
Or fear to lose the light of thy Creator's face ?

Call not this goodly world a place of harsh restraint :  
Such prison-house it were not, but for thy complaint.

Captain and King thou art, and canst command and  
fight ;  
Yet summon first the Chancellor, and learn the right.

The jailer of himself, he keeps the keys of hell  
In his own hands, who yet must there for ever dwell.

Acknowledge present good, or thou wilt need to learn,  
And by its loss, thy good, thy mercies to discern.

Some say man has no hurts ; some seek them to reveal  
And to exasperate more ; and some to hide and heal.

Ashes and dust thou art—confess it so to be,  
And from that moment forth it is not true for thee.

Whence is it if the Lord, the mighty God, is high,  
That, lifting up myself, I find Him not more nigh?

Truth, knowledge, wisdom, love, oh lay up these in store,  
True wealth which we may share, and yet ourselves have  
more.

Things earthly we must know ere love them : 'tis alone  
Things heavenly that must be first loved and after known.

To see the face of God, this makes the joy of heaven ;  
The purer then the eye, the more joy will be given.

Who claims thy praise, because the visions of his youth  
He now has learned to mock, deserves thy saddest ruth.

The sinews of Love's arm use makes more firm and  
strong,  
Which, being left unused, will fade and fail ere long.

When God afflicts thee, think He hews a rugged stone,  
Which must be shaped, or else aside as useless thrown.

'Tis ill with man when this is all he cares to know  
Of his own self, to wit, his vileness and his woe.

With patience to endure our griefs we learn not soon,  
But how much later still to take them as a boon ?

I heard a man proclaim, all men were wholly base :  
*One* such at once I knew there stood before my face.

God loves to work in wax, not marble ; let Him find,  
When He would mould thine heart, material to his mind.

The same rains rain from heaven on all the forest-trees,  
Yet those bring forth sweet fruits, and poisonous berries  
these.

A thousand blessings, Lord, to us Thou dost impart :  
We ask one blessing more, O Lord—a thankful heart.

Wouldst thou abolish quite strongholds of self and sin?  
Fear can but make the breach for Love to enter in.

To cure thee of thy pride, that deepest-seated ill,  
God humbled his own self—wilt thou thy pride keep still?

God humble and man proud! do angels, when they range  
This earth, see any sight at once so sad and strange?

Each dark unloving thought that mirror helps to stain,  
Which should God's image true give back to thee again.

What thing thou lovest most, thou mak'st its nature  
thine,  
Earthly, if that be earth—if that be God, divine.

Who showed me that my wound was deadly, made me  
note,  
And at the self-same time, the healing antidote.

Earth waits for sunshine, dew, and rain from heaven  
above ;  
So man should wait from God for pity, grace, and love.

Evil, like a rolling stone upon a mountain top,  
A child may first impel, a giant cannot stop.

He knew who healed our wounds, we quickly should be  
fain  
Our old hurts to forget—so let the scars remain.

All noblest things are still the commonest ; every place  
Has water, light, and air, and God's abounding grace.

He is not wholly lost, retaining love for aught ;  
Large fire from smallest spark has many times been  
brought.

God asks not *what*, but *whence*, thy work is : from the  
fruit

He turns his eye away, to prove the inmost root.

Oh work thy works in God ; He can rejoice in nought  
Save only in Himself, and what Himself has wrought.

When will the din of earth grate harshly on our ears ?  
When we have once heard plain the music of the spheres.

All nature has a voice, and this the sunflower's word,  
I look unto the light ; look thou unto the Lord.

The magnet cries, We both must to our pole incline,  
Restless, till that be found, and God, O man, is thine.

Why win we not at once what we in prayer require ?  
That we may learn great things as greatly to desire.

To schools of wisdom men with such small profit go,  
Because they can but learn what they already know.

One furnace many times will good and evil hold ;  
Yet what consumes the dross will only cleanse the gold.

God, being great, great gifts most willingly imparts,  
But we continue poor, that have such narrow hearts.

The tasks, the joys of earth, the same in heaven will be ;  
Only the little brook has widened to a sea.

Who hunt this world's delight, too late their hunting rue,  
When it a lion proves, the hunter to pursue.

Oh wherefore in such haste in men's sight to appear ?  
The cedar yields no fruit until its fiftieth year.

## SONNET.

ALL beautiful things bring sadness, nor alone  
Sweet music, as our wisest Poet spake,\*  
Because in us keen longings they awake  
After the good for which we pine and groan,  
From which exiled we make continual moan,  
Till once again we may our spirits slake  
At those clear streams, which man did first forsake,  
When he would dig for fountains of his own.  
All beauty makes us sad, yet not in vain,—  
For who would be ungracious to refuse,  
Or not to use, this sadness without pain,  
Whether it flows upon us from the hues  
Of sunset, from the time of stars and dews,  
From the clear sky, or waters pure of stain?

\* 'I am never merry when I hear sweet music.'

SHAKESPEARE.

## A BALLAD.

FROM THE SPANISH.

WHO ever such adventure yet,  
Or a like delight has known,  
To that which Count Arnaldo met  
On the morning of St. John?

The knight was riding by the sea,  
With his falcon in his hand  
And saw a pinnace fast and free,  
That was making to the land.

And he that by the rudder stood  
As he went was singing still,  
'My galley, O my galley good,  
Heaven protect thee from all ill ;

‘From all the dangers and the woe  
 That on ocean’s waters wait,  
 Almeria’s reefs and shallows low,  
 And Gibraltar’s stormy strait ;

‘From Venice and its shallow way,  
 From the shoals of Flanders’ coast,  
 And from the gulf of broad Biscay,  
 Where the dangers are the most.’

Then Count Arnaldo spoke aloud,  
 You might hear his accents well—  
 ‘Those words, thou mariner, I would  
 Unto me that thou wouldst tell.’

To him that mariner replied  
 In a courteous tone, but free—  
 ‘I never sing that song,’ he cried,  
 ‘Save to one who sails with me.’

#### *XERXES AT THE HELLESPONT.*

‘CALM is now that stormy water ; it has learned to  
 fear my wrath :  
 Lashed and fettered now it yields me for my hosts an easy  
 path :’  
 Seven long days did Persia’s monarch on the Hellespon-  
 tine shore,  
 Throned in state, behold his armies without pause de-  
 filing o’er ;  
 Only on the eighth the rearward to the further side were  
 past ;  
 Then one haughty glance of triumph far as eye could  
 reach he cast :

Far as eye could reach he saw them, multitudes equipped  
for war,  
Medians with their bows and quivers, link'd armour and  
tiar :  
From beneath the suns of Afric, from the snowy hills of  
Thrace,  
And from India's utmost borders, nations gathered in one  
place :  
At a single mortal's bidding all this pomp of war un-  
furled,  
All in league against the freedom and the one hope of  
the world.

'What though once some petty trophies from my captains  
thou hast won,  
Think not, Greece, to see another such a day as Mara-  
thon :  
Wilt thou dare await the conflict, or in battle hope to stand,  
When the Lord of sixty nations takes himself his cause  
in hand ?  
Lo ! they come, and mighty rivers, which they drink of  
once, are dried,  
And the wealthiest cities beggared, that for them one meal  
provide.  
Powers of number by their numbers numberless are over-  
borne,  
So I measure men by measure, as a husbandman his  
corn.  
Mine are all—this sceptre sways them ; mine is all in  
every part :'  
And he named himself most happy, and he blessed himself  
in heart—  
Blessed himself, but on that blessing tears abundant  
followed straight,  
For that moment thoughts came o'er him of man's painful  
brief estate :

Ere a hundred years were finished, where would all those  
 myriads be ?  
 Hellespont would still be rolling his blue waters to the sea ;  
 But of all those countless numbers not one living would  
 be found,  
 A dead host with their dead monarch, silent in the silent  
 ground.

*CHARLES V. BEFORE THE CONVENT OF  
 YUSTE, 1556.*

FROM THE GERMAN OF COUNT PLATEN.

'TIS night, and storms continually roar,  
 Ye monks of Spain, unbar for me the door.

Here in unbroken quiet let me fare,  
 Save when the loud bell startles me to prayer.

Make ready for me what your house has meet,  
 A friar's habit and a winding-sheet.

A little cell unto my use assign :  
 More than the half of all this world was mine.

The head that stoops unto the scissors now,  
 Under the weight of many crowns did bow.

The shoulders on which now the cowl is flung,  
 On them the ermine of the Cæsars hung.

I living now as dead myself behold,  
 And fall in ruins like this kingdom old.



*ON A YEW-TREE.*

IN HOUND CHURCHYARD, HANTS.

POLLED from this ancient yew-tree may have been  
The branch, with which some English archer sped  
His arrow, when the bravest stooped their head,  
The boldest chivalry of France were seen  
A moment's while beneath that tempest keen  
To bow their mailèd fronts at Azincour.  
Such age is thine, who yet dost still endure,  
Unto thy topmost branches fresh and green.

I said—it was a moment in my thought—  
In thy continuance thou must see in scorn  
Man's feeble generations, that are born  
And die, and then unto thy feet are brought.  
But no—for they who are of Nature taught,  
And Nature's self, are evermore too wise  
For barren scorn—her truer sympathies  
Grieve with us o'er the ruin death has wrought.

Thou too, thy many hundred summers past,  
Thy many hundred winters that have seen  
Thee in thy dark robe of unfailing green,  
Once and for all must lay it off at last :  
While that which at thy feet was sown, and cast  
To darkness and dishonour, that weak thing  
Shall live again, and in continual spring  
Hold ever its immortal beauty fast.

*TO A ROBIN REDBREAST,*

SINGING IN WINTER.

O H light of heart and wing,  
Light-hearted and light-winged, that dost cheer  
With song of sprightliest note the waning year,  
Thou canst so blithely sing,  
That we must only chide our own dull heart,  
If in thy music we can bear no part.

Thy haunts are winter-bare,  
The leaves in which thou didst so lately keep  
Are being trodden to a miry heap ;  
But thou art void of care,  
And singest not the less, or rather thou  
Hast kept thy best and boldest notes till now.

Thou art so bold to sing  
Thy sweetest music in the saddest hour,  
Because thy trust is in the love and power,  
Which can bring back the spring,  
Which can array the naked groves again,  
And paint with seasonable flowers the plain.

But we are merely sad,  
Whenas for us this earthly life has shed  
The leaves that once arrayed it ; and instead  
Of rich boughs, foliage-clad,  
A few bare sticks and twigs stand nakedly,  
Fronting against the cold and angry sky.

Yet would we only see  
That hope and joy, the growth of lower earth,  
Fall from us, that another truer birth  
Of the same things may be ;  
That the new buds are travelling up behind,  
Though hid as yet beneath the naked rind,

We should not then resign  
All gladness, when spring promises depart,  
But 'mid our wintriest bareness should find heart  
To join our songs with thine,  
Strong to fulfil, in spirit and in voice,  
That hardest of all precepts—to rejoice.

### RETRIBUTION.

• O H righteous doom, that they who make  
Pleasure their only end,  
Ordering the whole life for its sake,  
Miss that whereto they tend.

While they who bid stern duty lead,  
Content to follow, they,  
Of duty only taking heed,  
Find pleasure by the way.

*EVENING HYMN.*

TO the sound of evening bells  
All that lives to rest repairs,  
Birds unto their leafy dells,  
Beasts unto their forest lairs.

All things wear a home-bound look,  
From the weary hind that plods  
Through the corn-fields, to the rook  
Sailing tow'rd the glimmering woods.

'Tis the time with power to bring  
Tearful memories of home  
To the sailor wandering  
On the far-off barren foam.

What a still and holy time !  
Yonder glowing sunset seems  
Like the pathway to a clime  
Only seen till now in dreams.

Pilgrim, here compelled to roam,  
Nor allowed that path to tread ;  
Now when sweetest sense of home  
On all living hearts is shed,

Doth not yearning sad, sublime,  
At this season stir thy breast,  
That thou canst not at this time  
Seek thy home and happy rest ?

TO —.

LOOK what a glory from the setting sun  
Has fringed that cloud with silver edges bright,  
And how it seems to drink the golden light  
Of evening : you would think that it had won  
A splendour of its own : but lo ! anon  
You shall behold a dark mass float away.  
Emptied of light and radiance, from the day,  
Its glory faded utterly and gone.  
And doubt not we should suffer the same loss  
As this weak vapour, which awhile did seem  
Transfigured and made pure of all its dross,  
If, having shared the light, we should misdeem  
That light our own, or count we hold in fee  
That which we must receive continually.

TO THE SAME.

WE live not in our moments or our years :  
The present we fling from us like the rind  
Of some sweet Future, which we after find  
Bitter to taste, or bind *that* in with fears,  
And water it beforehand with our tears—  
Vain tears for that which never may arrive :  
Meanwhile the joy whereby we ought to live,  
Neglected or unheeded, disappears.  
Wiser it were to welcome and make ours  
Whate'er of good, though small, the present brings—  
Kind greetings, sunshine, song of birds, and flowers,  
With a child's pure delight in little things ;  
And of the griefs unborn to rest secure,  
Knowing that mercy ever will endure.

*TO THE SAME.*

**I**F sorrow came not near us, and the lore  
Which wisdom-working sorrow best imparts,  
Found never time of entrance to our hearts,  
If we had won already a safe shore,  
Or if our changes were already o'er,  
Our pilgrim being we might quite forget,  
Our hearts but faintly on those mansions set,  
Where there shall be no sorrow any more.  
Therefore we will not be unwise to ask  
This, nor secure exemption from our share  
Of mortal suffering, and life's drearier task—  
Not this, but grace our portion so to bear,  
That we may rest, when grief and pain are over,  
With the meek Son of our Almighty Lover.

*TO THE SAME.*

**O**DOWEED with a searching glance to see  
Quite through the hollow masks, wherewith the bare  
And worthless shows of greatness vizored are,  
This lore thou hast, because all things to thee  
Are proven by the absolute decree  
Of duty, and whatever will not square  
With that prime wisdom, though of seeming fair  
Or stately, thou rejectest faithfully :  
Till chidden in thy strength, each random aim  
Of good, whose aspect heavenward does not turn,  
Shrinks self-rebuked—thou looking kindest blame  
From the calm region of thine eyes that burn  
With tempered but continuous flashes bright,  
Like the mild lightnings of a tropic night.

TO THE SAME.

HOW thick the wild-flowers blow about our feet,  
Thick-strewn and unregarded, which, if rare,  
We should take note how beautiful they were,  
How delicately wrought, of scent how sweet.  
And mercies which on every path we meet,  
Whose very commonness should win more praise,  
Do for that very cause less wonder raise,  
And these with slighter thankfulness we greet.  
Yet pause *thou* often on life's onward way,  
Pause time enough to stoop and gather one  
Of these sweet wild-flowers—time enough to tell  
Its beauty over; this when thou hast done,  
And marked it duly, then if thou canst lay  
It wet with thankful tears into thy bosom, well!

TO MY CHILD.

THY gladness makes me thankful every way,  
To look upon thy gladness makes me glad;  
While yet in part it well might render sad  
Us thinking that we too might sport and play,  
And keep like thee continual holiday,  
If we retained the things which once we had,  
If we like happy neophytes were clad  
Still in baptismal stoles of white array.  
And yet the gladness of the innocent child  
Has not more matter for our thankful glee  
Than the dim sorrows of the man defiled;  
Since both in sealing one blest truth agree—  
Joy is of God, but heaviness and care  
Of our own hearts and what has harboured there.

---

AN open wound which has been healed anew ;  
A stream dried up, that once again is fed  
With waters making green its grassy bed ;  
A tree that withered was, but to the dew  
Puts forth young leaves and blossoms fresh of hue  
Even from the branches which had seemed most dead ;  
A sea which having been disquieted,  
Now stretches like a mirror calm and blue,—  
Our hearts to each of these were likened well.  
But Thou wert the physician and the balm ;  
Thou, Lord, the fountain, whence anew was filled  
Their parch'd channel ; Thou the dew that fell  
On their dead branches ; 'twas thy voice that stilled  
The storm within ; Thou didst command the calm.

*NEW YEAR'S EVE.*

THE strong in spiritual action need not look  
Upon the new-found year as on a scroll,  
The which their hands lack cunning to unroll,  
But in it read, as in an open book,  
All they are seeking—high resolve unshook  
By circumstance's unforeseen control,  
Successful striving, and whate'er the soul  
Has recognized for duty, not forsook.  
But they whom many failures have made tame,  
Question the future with that reverent fear,  
Which best their need of heavenly aid may show,  
Will it have purer thought, and loftier aim  
Pursued more loftily ? That a man might know  
What thou wilt bring him, thou advancing year !



*ON THE CONSECRATION OF A NEW  
CHURCHYARD.*

THAT we may here securely lay our dead,  
In peace to rest till that great trumpet call,  
This spot henceforth we hedge around from all  
Offence of careless or injurious tread ;  
And from henceforth this mould is hallow'd,  
That so not merely by an outward law,  
But through a secret and invisible awe  
They may be guarded in their narrow bed.  
Ye reverential fears lest aught offend  
The unfeeling trunk, or outrage the dry dust,  
Fears by this work attested, hail ! all hail !  
Sure pledge and proof that this is not the end ;  
Till faith, and piety, and Christian trust  
Fail from among us, ye shall never fail.

---

LORD, what a change within us one short hour  
Spent in thy presence will prevail to make,  
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,  
What parch'd grounds refresh, as with a shower !  
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower ;  
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,  
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear ;  
We kneel how weak, we rise how full of power.  
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong  
Or others—that we are not always strong,  
That we are ever overborne with care,  
That we should ever weak or heartless be,  
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,  
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee ?

---

A GARDEN so well watered before morn  
Is hotly up, that not the swart sun's blaze,  
Down beating with unmitigated rays,  
Nor scorching winds from fiery deserts borne,  
Shall quite prevail to leave it bare and shorn  
Of its green beauty, shall not quite prevail  
That all its morning freshness shall exhale,  
Till evening and the evening dews return—  
A blessing such as this our hearts might reap,  
The freshness of the garden they might share,  
Through the long day a heavenly freshness keep,  
If knowing how the day and the day's glare  
Must beat upon them, we would largely steep  
And water them betimes with dews of prayer.

---

WHEN hearts are full of yearning tenderness  
For the loved absent, whom we cannot reach,  
By deed or token, gesture or kind speech,  
The spirit's true affection to express ;  
When hearts are full of innermost distress,  
And we are doomed to stand inactive by,  
Watching the soul's or body's agony,  
Which human effort helps not to make less—  
Then like a cup capacious to contain  
The overflowings of the heart, is prayer ;  
The longing of the soul is satisfied,  
The keenest darts of anguish blunted are ;  
And though we cannot cease to yearn or grieve,  
We yet have learned in patience to abide.

---

IF we with earnest effort could succeed  
To make our life one long connected prayer,  
As lives of some perhaps have been and are,  
If never leaving Thee, we had no need  
Our wandering spirits back again to lead  
Into thy presence, but continued there,  
Like angels standing on the highest stair  
Of the sapphire throne, this were to pray indeed.  
But if distractions manifold prevail,  
And if in this we must confess we fail,  
Grant us to keep at least a prompt desire,  
Continual readiness for prayer and praise,  
An altar heaped and waiting to take fire  
With the least spark, and leap into a blaze.

### *THE TEMPTATION.*

WHEN man was foiled in Paradise, he fell  
From that fair spot, thenceforward to confess  
The barren and the thorny wilderness  
Was the one place where he had right to dwell:  
And therefore in the wilderness as well  
Our second Head did that dread strife decide,  
And those closed gates again set open wide,  
Victorious o'er the frauds and strength of hell.  
Thou wentest to the proof, O fearless Lord,  
Even to the desert, as thy battle field,  
A champion going of his free accord;  
We had no fears, for unlike him of old  
Who lost that battle for us, Thou didst wield  
Arms of unearthly temper, heavenly mould.

---

WHEN we have failed to chasten and restrain  
Our wandering thoughts, and in return they cheat  
And mock us with some poor yet proud conceit,  
And fondest fancies in procession vain  
(Ourselves their centre), flock through heart and brain,  
Each tendering amplest homage at our feet,  
Till loathing of each humbler task we meet  
Has grown upon us, scorn and sick disdain—  
What then will make our guilty pride to sink,  
Or what the spirit's temper will restore,—  
Where in the world of healing is there spell  
So mighty, as at times like these to think  
Of Jesus sitting by Samaritan well,  
Or teaching some poor fishers on the shore?

---

HE might have reared a palace at a word,  
Who sometimes had not where to lay his head:  
Time was, and He who nourished crowds with bread  
Would not one meal unto Himself afford:  
Twelve legions girded with angelic sword  
Were at his beck, the scorned and buffeted:  
He healed another's scratch, his own side bled,  
Side, feet, and hands, with cruel piercings gored.  
Oh, wonderful the wonders left undone!  
And scarce less wonderful than those He wrought;  
Oh self-restraint, passing all human thought,  
To have all power, and be as having none;  
Oh self-denying Love, which felt alone  
For needs of others, never for its own!

---

ULYSSES, sailing by the Sirens' isle,  
Sealed first his comrades' ears, then bade them fast  
Bind him with many a fetter to the mast,  
Lest those sweet voices should their souls beguile,  
And to their ruin flatter them, the while  
Their homeward bark was sailing swiftly past ;  
And thus the peril they behind them cast,  
Though chased by those weird voices many a mile.  
But yet a nobler cunning Orpheus used :  
No fetter he put on, nor stopped his ear,  
But ever, as he passed, sang high and clear  
The blisses of the Gods, their holy joys,  
And with diviner melody confused  
And marred earth's sweetest music to a noise.

---

WERE the sad tablets of our hearts alone  
A dreary blank, for Thee the task were slight,  
To draw fair letters there and lines of light :  
But while far other spectacle is shown  
By them, with dismal traceries overdrawn,  
Oh ! task it seems, transcending highest might,  
Ever again to make them clean and white,  
Effacing the sad secrets they have known.  
And then what heaven were better than a name,  
If there must haunt and cling unto us there  
Abiding memories of sin and shame ?  
Dread doubt ! which finds no answer anywhere  
Except in Him, who with His power did bring  
To make us feel our sin an alien thing.

---

IN the mid garden doth a fountain stand ;  
From font to font its waters fall alway,  
Freshening the leaves by their continual play :—  
Such often have I seen in southern land,  
While every leaf, as though by light winds fanned,  
Has quivered underneath the dazzling spray,  
Keeping its greenness all the sultry day,  
While others pine aloof, a parchèd band.  
And in the mystic garden of the soul  
A fountain, nourished from the upper springs,  
Sends ever its clear waters up on high,  
Which while a dewy freshness round it flings,  
All plants which there acknowledge its control  
Show fair and green, else drooping, pale, and dry.

*ST. CHRYSOSTOM.*

'TIS not by action only, not by deed,  
Though that be just and holy, pure and wise,  
That man may to his last perfection rise ;  
Of suffering as of doing he has need :  
Thus prospers with due change the heavenly seed,  
While stormy night succeeds to sunny day :  
Thus the good metal, proven every way,  
From the last dross that clung to it is freed.  
And thus for thee, O glorious man, on whom  
Love well-deserved, and honour waited long,  
In thy last years, in place of timely ease,  
There did remain another loftier doom,  
Pain, travail, exile, peril, scorn and wrong—  
Glorious before, but glorified by these.

‘Into whatever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence.’—MATT. x. 11.

L ORD, weary of a painful way,  
All night our heads we would not lay  
Under the naked sky ;  
But ask who worthiest ? who will best  
Entreat a tired and lowly guest  
With promptest courtesy ?

And Thou art worthiest ; there will not  
One loving usage be forgot  
By Thee ; thy kiss will greet  
Us entering ; Thou wilt not disdain  
To wash away each guilty stain  
From off our soiled feet.

We enter, from this time to prove  
Thy hospitality and love  
Shown tow’rd thy meanest guest :  
From house to house we would not stray,  
For whither should we go away ?  
With Thee is perfect rest.

---

W EEP not for broad lands lost ;  
Weep not for fair hopes crost ;  
Weep not when limbs wax old ;  
Weep not when friends grow cold ;  
Weep not that Death must part  
Thine and the best-loved heart ;  
Yet weep, weep all thou can—  
Weep, weep, because thou art  
A sin-defiled man.

---

THIS did not once so trouble me,  
That better I could not love Thee ;  
But now I feel and know  
That only when we love, we find  
How far our hearts remain behind  
The love they should bestow.

While we had little care to call  
On Thee, and scarcely prayed at all,  
We seemed enough to pray :  
But now we only think with shame,  
How seldom to thy glorious Name  
Our lips their offerings pay.

And when we gave yet slighter heed  
Unto our brother's suffering need,  
Our hearts reproached us then  
Not half so much as now, that we  
With such a careless eye can see  
The woes and wants of men.

In doing is this knowledge won,  
To see what yet remains undone ;  
With this our pride repress,  
And give us grace, a growing store,  
That day by day we may do more,  
And may esteem it less.



### *COMPENSATION.*

WOULDST thou from each man's coronal select  
The choicest leaf wherewith his brows are deckt ;

That all into one chaplet for thy head  
Entwined, thou might'st be proudly garlanded ?

Look round thee—is not each thing else content,  
Having a share, not all the ornament ?

The sweet-voiced nightingale is dusky brown,  
While golden-plumaged birds no music own.

The ruby long outlives the scented rose ;  
But then the ruby no such fragrance knows.

From Egypt Moses did the people lead ;  
To plant in Canaan must be Joshua's deed.

If David laid all rich materials by,  
His son first reared the gorgeous fane on high.

It did but once and unto One compete,  
All rays of glory round his head should meet.

---

LORD, many times I am aweary quite  
Of mine own self, my sin, my vanity—  
Yet be not Thou, or I am lost outright,  
Weary of me.

And hate against myself I often bear,  
And enter with myself in fierce debate :  
Take Thou my part against myself, nor share  
In that just hate.

Best friends might loathe us, if what things perverse  
We know of our own selves, they also knew :  
Lord, Holy One ! if Thou who knowest worse  
Shouldst loathe us too !

---

‘And Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone.’—EXOD. xxxiv. 29.

IF that in sight of God is great  
Which counts itself for small,  
We by that law humility  
The chiefest grace must call ;  
Which being such, not knows itself  
To be a grace at all.

How glorious was that meekest man  
In all eyes save his own,  
When from his splendid countenance  
On all the people shone  
A glory insupportable,  
Unto himself unknown.

*THE DAY OF DEATH.*

THOU inevitable day,  
When a voice to me shall say—  
'Thou must rise and come away ;

All thine other journeys past,  
Gird thee, and make ready fast  
For thy longest and thy last'—

Day deep-hidden from our sight  
In impenetrable night,  
Who may guess of thee aright ?

Art thou distant, art thou near ?  
Wilt thou seem more dark or clear ?  
Day with more of hope or fear ?

Wilt thou come, unseen before  
Thou art standing at the door,  
Saying, light and life are o'er ?

Or with such a gradual pace,  
As shall leave me largest space  
To regard thee face to face ?

Shall I lay my drooping head  
On some loved lap, round my bed  
Prayer be made and tears be shed

Or at distance from mine own,  
Name and kin alike unknown,  
Make my solitary moan ?

Will there yet be things to leave,  
Hearts to which this heart must cleave,  
From which parting it must grieve?

Or shall life's best ties be o'er,  
And all loved ones gone before  
To that other happier shore?

Shall I gently fall on sleep,  
Death, like slumber, o'er me creep,  
Like a slumber sweet and deep?

Or the soul long strive in vain,  
To escape, with toil and pain,  
From its half-divided chain?

Little skills it where or how,  
If thou comest then or now,  
With a smooth or angry brow ;

Come thou must, and we must die—  
Jesus, Saviour, stand Thou by,  
When that last sleep seals our eye.

*THE LAW OF LOVE.*

SEE *2* KINGS iv. 1-6.

POUR forth the oil, pour boldly forth,  
It will not fail until  
Thou fairest vessels to provide,  
Which it may freely fill.

•

But then, when such are found no more,  
Though flowing broad and free  
Till then, and nourished from on high,  
It straightway stanch'd will be.

Dig channels for the streams of Love,  
Where they may broadly run ;  
And Love has overflowing streams  
To fill them every one.

But if at any time thou cease  
Such channels to provide,  
The very springs of Love for thee  
Will soon be parched and dried.

For we must share, if we would keep,  
That good thing from above ;  
Ceasing to give, we cease to have—  
Such is the law of Love.

---

A GENIAL moment oft has given  
What years of toil and pain,  
Of long industrious toil, have striven  
To win, and all in vain.

Yet count not, when thine end is won,  
That labour merely lost ;  
Nor say it had been wiser done  
To spare the painful cost.

When heaped upon the altar lie  
All things to feed the fire—  
One spark alighting from on high—  
The flames at once aspire ;

But those sweet gums and fragrant woods,  
Its rich materials rare,  
By tedious quest o'er lands and floods  
Had first been gathered there.

---

IF there had anywhere appeared in space  
Another place of refuge, where to flee,  
Our hearts had taken refuge in that place,  
And not with Thee.

For we against creation's bars had beat  
Like prisoned eagles, through great worlds had sought  
Though but a foot of ground to plant our feet,  
Where Thou wert not.

And only when we found in earth and air,  
In heaven or hell, that such might nowhere be—  
That we could not flee from Thee anywhere,  
We fled to Thee.

*'DUST TO DUST.'*

O H blessing wearing semblance of a curse,  
We fear thee, thou stern sentence—yet to be  
Linked to immortal bodies were far worse  
Than thus to be set free.

For mingling with the life-blood through each vein  
The venom of the serpent's bite has run,  
And only thus might be expelled again—  
Thus only health be won.

Shall we not then a gracious sentence own,  
Now since the leprosy has fretted through  
The entire house, that Thou wilt take it down,  
And build it all anew?

Build it this time (since Thou wilt build again),  
A holy house, where righteousness may dwell ;  
And we, though in the unbuilding there be pain,  
Will still affirm,—'tis well.

FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY.

How without dying to flee thee, O life ? for thine are a  
thousand  
Ills, and those most hard either to shun or to bear.  
Pleasant is all which to nature thou owest, the land and  
the ocean,  
Pleasant the stars and sun and the fair cirque of the  
moon.  
All things else are sorrows and fears ; and if any good  
thing  
Fall to a man, then a sure penalty waits him anon.

*TO A FRIEND.*

THE courses of our lives, which side by side  
Ran for some little while, are sundered now ;  
We meet not now, as once, day after day,  
In pleasant intercourse to change our thoughts :  
Yet I remember often that past time,  
And all the thoughts which filled it ; for just then  
We were as merchants seeking goodly pearls,  
Seeking one pearl of price ; and when we read  
In books of some, or met on life's highway,  
Who had returned as from a fruitless quest,  
Bringing these tidings only, that all lands  
They had gone through, had searched the furthest coasts,  
Wherever fame reported that such pearl  
Was to be won, but still had nothing found,  
And now believed not there was aught to find,  
Our hearts would die within us, loath to leave  
Their hope, which yet grew weaker day by day,  
That somewhere was a key which should unlock  
The many chambers of this human life,  
A law harmoniously to reconcile  
All the perplexed appearances of things,  
A treasure which should make for ever rich  
The finder : for slight profit then to us,  
And little comfort might we draw from things  
Wherein some found, or fancied that they found,  
The immortal longings of their spirits slaked,  
And all life's mystery lightened. What at best  
The beautiful creations of man's art,  
If resting not on some diviner ground  
Than man's own mind that formed them,—at their best  
What but the singing of a mournful dirge,  
What but the scattering flowers upon the grave  
Of his abandoned hopes and buried joys ?



Oh miserable comfort ! loss is loss,  
And death is death ; and after all is done,  
After the flowers are scattered on the tomb,  
After the singing of the sweetest dirge,  
The mourner with his heart uncomforted,  
Returning to his solitary home,  
Thinks with himself, if any one had aught  
Of stronger consolation, he should speak ;  
If not, 'twere best for ever to hold peace.  
Such, and no more, to us contemplating  
The life of man, such, and no truer, seemed  
The alleviations to be won from these,  
Poor withering garlands flung upon a grave,  
The mournful beauty of a couchant Sphinx,  
Watching by some half-buried pyramid,  
Or fallen column in the wilderness.

And Nature's self, our foster-mother dear,  
What could she do for us ? what help impart ?  
Or when we mourned as lonely orphans here,  
Or fled unto her bosom, there to find  
Pity and love, there were no beatings there,  
There were no pulses in her cold cold heart ;  
She had no happy family of love  
In which to adopt us. Beauty without love,  
How should it cherish or make less forlorn,  
Yea, how should it not leave forlorn still,  
The forlorn heart of man ? so left it us,  
Who gazed upon the incense-breathing flowers,  
Trees and rejoicing rivers, suns and stars,  
Keeping their courses in untroubled joy,  
By sin unstained, by longings undisturbed ;  
While we, the first-fruits of creation, we,  
For whose dear sake all lower things were made,  
Mourned evermore. How often then they seemed  
Like the hired servants whom the Prodigal

Bethought him of, as satisfied with bread,  
While we, the children of our Father's house  
Were perishing with hunger far away.  
What longing had we then to be as these,  
To be as trees or flowers, as rocks or stones,  
Glad might we have relinquished and put by  
The burden of our immortality,  
And all the drear prerogatives of man.

Or sometimes finding little nearer home,  
That we should care to dwell with our own hearts,  
We looked abroad, and spake of some bright dawn  
Of happiness and freedom, peace and love,  
Day long desired, and now about to break  
On all the nations ; yet the while we felt  
That we were speaking false and hollow words,—  
For how should one, despairing of himself,  
Find hope for others ? where no centre is,  
Centre established sure of life and joy,  
What is it but an idle thing to draw  
The widest circle of imagined good  
At distance round us ? where 'tis ill with each,  
How vain to hope it should be well with all !

But now, though not to outward change we look  
For the fulfilling of that glorious hope,  
Have we renounced that hope ?—or is it grown  
A less substantial vision, because now  
No fabled world, imagined isles beyond  
The liminary ocean, such as never  
Have been but in the longing of man's heart,  
Not these now occupy our hearts and hopes ;  
But Eden and the New Jerusalem,  
The garden and the city of our God,  
The things which have been and shall be again,  
Fill up the prospect upon either side,  
Before us and behind ? or have we left

Our love for Nature, now to love her less,  
Since we have learned that all we so admire  
Is only as her soiled and weekday dress,  
And nothing to the glory she shall wear,  
When for the coming sabbath of the world  
She shall put on her festival attire—  
Or closed our hearts to what of beautiful  
Man by strong spell and earnest toil has won  
To take intelligible forms of art,  
Now that all these are recognized to be  
Desires and yearnings, feeling after Him,  
And by Him only to be satisfied,  
Who is Himself the eternal Loveliness?

*A PASSAGE FROM ST. AUGUSTINE.*

WERT thou a wanderer on a foreign strand,  
Who yet couldst only in thy native land  
Find peace or joy or any blessed thing—  
And, thy sore travail to an end to bring,  
Shouldst thither now determine to return,  
Since in all other places doomed to mourn—  
But having need of carriages for this,  
To bring thee to thy country and true bliss,  
What if the pleasant motion which they made,  
With the fair prospects on each side displayed,  
Should so attract thee, thou at last wert fain  
The things for use lent only, to retain ;  
Entangled so with their perverse delight,  
That from thy country alienated quite,  
And its true joys whereto thou first didst tend,  
And loathing to approach thy journey's end,  
Thou shouldst be now a pilgrim with the fear  
Lest thy long pilgrimage's close were near—  
If this way it fared with thee, we might say,  
Thou didst man's life unto the life portray.

*TO POETRY.*

**I**N my life's youth, while yet the deeper needs  
Of the inmost spirit unawakened were,  
Thou couldst recount of high heroic deeds,  
Couldst add a glory unto earth and air,  
A crowning glory, making fair more fair :  
So that my soul was pleased and satisfied,  
Which had as yet no higher, deeper care,  
And said that thou shouldst evermore abide  
With me, and make my bliss, and be my spirit's bride.

But years went on, and thoughts which slept before,  
O'er the horizon of my soul arose—  
Thoughts which perplexed me ever more and more ;  
As though a Sphinx should meet one, and propose  
Enigmas hard, and which whoso not knows  
To interpret, must her prey and victim be ;  
And I, round whom thick darkness seemed to close,  
Knew only this one thing, that misery  
Remained, if none could solve this riddle unto me.

Then I remembered that from thy lips fell  
Large words of promise, how thou couldst succeed  
All darkest mysteries of life to spell ;  
Therefore I pleaded with thee now to read  
The riddle that was baffling me, with speed,  
To yield some answer to the questioning.  
Something thou spak'st, but nothing to my need,  
So that I counted thee an idle thing,  
Who, having promised much, couldst no true succour  
bring.

And I turned from thee, and I left thee quite,  
And of thy name to hear had little care :  
For I was only seeking if by flight  
I might shun *her*, who else would rend and tear  
Me, who could not her riddle dark declare :—  
This toil, the anguish of this flight was mine,  
Until at last, enquiring everywhere,  
I won an answer from another shrine,  
A holier oracle, a temple more divine.

But when no longer without hope I mourned,  
When peace and joy revived in me anew,  
Even from that moment my old love returned,  
My former love, yet wiser and more true,  
As seeing what for us thy power can do,  
And what thy skill can make us understand  
And know—and where that skill attained not to ;  
How far thou canst sustain us by thy hand,  
And what things shall in us a holier care demand—

My love of thee and thine ; for earth and air,  
And every common sight of sea and plain,  
Then put new robes of glory on, and wear  
The same till now ; and things which dead had lain  
Revived, as flowers that smell the dew and rain :  
I was a man again of hopes and fears,  
The fountains of my heart flowed forth again,  
Whose sources had seemed dry for many years,  
And there was given me back the sacred gift of tears.

And that old hope, which never quite had perished,  
A longing which had stirred me from a boy,  
And which in darkest seasons I had cherished,  
Which nothing could quite vanquish or destroy,

This with all other things of life and joy  
Revived within me—and I too would seek  
The power, that moved my own heart, to employ  
On others, who perchance would hear me speak,  
If but the tones were true, although the voice were weak.

Though now there seems one only worthy aim  
For poet,—that my strength were as my will !—  
And which renounce he cannot without blame—  
To make men feel the presence by his skill  
Of an eternal loveliness, until  
All souls are faint with longing for their home,  
Yet the same while are strengthened to fulfil  
Their task on earth, that they may surely come  
Unto the land of life, who here as exiles roam.

And what though loftiest fancies are not mine,  
Nor words of chiefest power, yet unto me  
Some voices reach out of the inner shrine,  
Heard in mine heart of hearts, and I can see  
At times some glimpses of the majesty,  
Some prints and footsteps of the glory trace,  
Which have been left on earth, that we might be  
By them led forward to the secret place,  
Where we perchance might see that glory face to face.

If in this quest, O power of sacred song,  
Thou canst assist,—oh, never take thy flight !  
If thou canst make us gladder or more strong,  
If thou canst fling glimpses of glorious light  
Upon life's deepest depth and highest height,  
Or pour upon its low and level plain  
A gleam of mellower gladness, if this might  
Thou hast—(and it is thine)—then not in vain  
Are we henceforth prepared to follow in the train.

## GENOVEVA

### I.

AS the finest crystal still  
Bides the most exposed to ill,  
As the finest crystal ever,  
Brittlest, may the soonest shiver,  
So in this world fares no less  
With some rarer happiness :  
Such a happiness was thine,  
Siegfried, Count and Palatine,  
When thou leddest home thy bride,  
When thou watchedst her in pride,  
As all eyes did on her wait,  
Moving in her queenly state—  
Genoveva, loveliest flower  
Blooming in Brabantine bower  
Once, and now transferred to dwell  
On the banks of fair Moselle.  
'Twas in sooth a golden time,  
And the world was in its prime  
For them two ;—the sun stood high  
Of their rare felicity—  
Standing right above their head,  
Did no way a shadow shed.

But this might not always last ;  
Happy months too soon have past :  
Charles has called from east and west  
All who own his high behest ;  
Charles has bid from far and near  
All his liegemen to appear.  
For must now at length be met,  
Now must have its limits set,

That wild tide of Moslem war,  
Which has rolled so fierce and far,  
Issuing from Arabian sands,  
Overflowing mightiest lands,  
Till it reached to western Spain,  
And has burst o'er Aquitaine,  
And is panting to advance  
To the very heart of France.  
At the gate are trumpets sounding,  
And impatient chargers bounding,  
And a numerous proud array  
Only for their chieftain stay ;  
And he comes ; in lady's bowers  
'Tis no time to waste the hours.  
Who this precious time would choose  
In ignoble ease to lose,  
While by others fields are fought  
Glorious deeds by others wrought,  
While by other hearts and hands  
France is freed from miscreant bands ?  
Nor would she her lord detain,  
Though her arms are like a chain,  
That will scarce relax again ;  
Though when now the latest note  
Of the trump in air doth float,  
By her maidens she is found  
Without motion on the ground,  
In a deep and heavy swoon ;  
But from thence reviving soon  
Doth her widowed state beguile,  
Cheers the sad and lonely while,  
Not with shows or pageantries,  
Not with pomps or revelries,  
But with prayer and vigil long,  
With the Church's solemn song,  
Stirring so the malice fell  
And the deepest hate of hell.



## II.

Well thou farest, gallant Count,  
Foremost in the battle brunt,  
Foremost on that famous field,  
When to heaven two faiths appealed,  
When seven times uprose the sun,  
And the battle was not done,  
And six times went down the day  
On an undecided fray ;  
Well thou speedest ; to thy king  
No mean help thy hand did bring  
On that last day, when he smote  
Many a Moslem's mail'd coat,  
When his ponderous blows so well  
Like on ringing anvil fell,  
That to him henceforth the name  
Of ' The Hammer ' justly came.  
Well thou farest—better far  
Than that sadly-gleaming star,  
Thou didst leave to shine alone  
In thy sphere, when thou wert gone—  
Better than that lonely dove,  
Fond of heart, and true of love,  
Who within her widowed bowers  
Counts the tardy-pacing hours.  
What a mist of hell obscure  
Gathers round thy planet pure !  
What a serpent coils and clings  
Round thy fair dove's silver wings !  
What of hellish wiles are met  
Round about her, to beset  
First the honour, then the life  
Of that ever-faithful wife !  
Ill didst thou, O Count, provide,  
Setting at thy lady's side,

For thine holy home to guard  
And to keep due watch and ward,  
One who there such watch doth keep  
As the wolf on silly sheep :  
Such a guard the kite would prove  
To the weakness of the dove.  
Evil man ! who when there fell  
On his bosom sparks of hell,  
Did not, as alone was meet,  
Stamp them underneath his feet,  
With an indignation keen  
That such thoughts should once have been ;  
But those sparks of foul desire  
Left to kindle to a fire,  
Fed and fanned them, till they grew  
Such a mighty flame unto,  
As will not be quenched, before  
One it has consumed, or more.  
—He has dared to tell his tale ;  
She, with fear and anger pale,  
Twice must hear, but when the third  
Time this suit of shame she heard,  
Then exclaimed, ‘Thy lord shall know  
Whom he has entrusted so :  
Evil meed wilt thou have earned,  
When thy lord has back returned ;  
Twice forgiven—but twice in vain—  
Hence ! nor see my face again.’  
Forth the caitiff went, and told  
To his mother, weird and old,  
Full of evil plots and wiles,  
Full of treacheries and guiles,  
All his danger and his fear—  
—‘ Help me, or my death is near ;  
Give me counsel, or I die :  
One must perish—she or I.’

## III.

Innocence is fearless still ;  
Means not and suspects not ill.  
Of the band that waited near  
Genoveva, one was dear,  
For his piety beloved,  
And with many signs approved  
Of her grace : his tender age  
Did he unto God engage,  
Who, before her kneeling, read  
From an open scroll outspread,  
Where were written records high  
Of the Christian chivalry ;  
Of young Agnes, tender flower,  
Gathered in her childhood's hour ;  
And of patient Laurence, spread  
Calmly on his fiery bed ;  
Of Eulalia, whose fair corse,  
Flung abroad without remorse,  
From the care of heaven must know  
Its pure winding-sheet of snow ;  
And of them that bore so well  
All the spite of earth and hell,  
Whose dear ashes forth were thrown  
To make rich her neighbouring Rhone ;  
And of many more beside,  
In extremest tortures tried ;  
Names that never shall grow old,  
Hearts to servile fear unsold,  
Holy Virgins, Martyrs bold,  
Lilies those of dazzling white,  
Roses these with red hues dight,  
In the garden of the Lord ;—  
With a pensive ear she heard,

With a spirit inly wrought,  
Marvelling in secret thought,  
How the holiest and most pure  
Most were given to endure ;  
How it still was theirs to drain  
Deepest cups of mortal pain.

But these musings must have end,  
Must reveal what they portend.  
Hark ! a noise is heard without,  
Then a rude inrushing rout,  
Led of him who should no more  
Dare to stand her face before.  
Up she started in surprise ;  
All the coming on her eyes  
Flashing in a moment rose—  
The long order of her woes,  
The foul tale, the hateful lie,  
And the deep-laid villany.  
Knew she now what cup of pain  
Unto her was given to drain ;  
Her as well that cup had found,  
Had unto her lips come round.  
' Ha ! ' that faithless guardian cried,  
When the wondering twain he spied,  
' It was this, even this I thought,  
And my fears to proof are brought.  
Have we not endured this wrong  
Done against our lord too long ?  
Hence, away with both ! away !  
Hence, nor heed them, what they say ; •  
Mine the charge, that without stain  
My lord's honour should remain :  
If this may not be, at least  
Shall the rank offence have ceased.  
Bear him to his death—her doom  
She shall wait in dungeon gloom.'

## IV.

Such a mist of hell obscure  
Gathers round that planet pure,  
Such a serpent coils and clings  
Round that fair dove's silver wings,  
Such of hellish wiles are met,  
And such treacheries to beset  
First the honour, then the life  
Of that ever-faithful wife ;  
While the Count do spaces wide,  
Streams and mountains, still divide  
From his perilled lady's side.  
For with slow and sullen pace,  
Turning oftentimes the face,  
Afric's swarthy hosts retreat  
From the field of their defeat ;—  
As with many a pause of pride  
Ebbeth a reluctant tide,  
Slowly on its refluent track,  
Is with many a pause drawn back,  
Oft with new-awakened roar  
Winning ground again, before  
It has quite left bare the shore—  
As a lion from his prey  
By the hunters scared away,  
Who though now no more remaining,  
Yet the show of flight disdaining,  
Often turns, and makes his stand,  
Glares on the pursuing band,  
Till the shepherds back recoil,  
Winning no unbloody spoil.  
And the gallant Count of Treves,  
Though by night and day he weaves  
Visions of his happy home,  
Though full oft his fancies roam

From the camp's tumultuous noise,  
From the battle's heady joys,  
To the banks of fair Moselle,  
Where for him all good things dwell,  
Though he yearns for quick release  
Unto scenes of holy peace,  
Yet will faithfully abide  
By his noble captain's side,  
Till into the western seas,  
Or beyond the Pyrenees,  
Is the latest foeman urged,  
And the land is throughly purged.

Joy to him ! for tidings come,  
Letters from his distant home.  
Joy it is not ; he doth stand,  
Those crushed letters in his hand,  
And men speak, but meaning none  
From their speech his ear has won ;  
O'er the world doth blackness pass,  
Black the sunlight on the grass,  
Black the sun itself—on all  
Blackness falls, a murky pall.  
The firm heavens are round him wheeling,  
The fixed earth beneath him reeling ;  
Oh, the cunning web of hell :  
Oh, the treachery woven too well !  
— ' Genoveva ! oh no, no—  
Yet it is, it must be so.  
Oh 'twas well and bravely done,  
Thou thy master's praise hast won,  
Who didst boldly use thy power  
And didst cast her in that hour  
To a dungeon out of sight.  
Would that she had died outright,  
Died with him, and shared his fate,  
In this sin her guilty mate.

Better so—but let her die  
With the child of infamy,  
Child of infamy and scorn  
That was in the dungeon born.’  
With this message he in part  
The wild tumult of his heart  
Has assuaged—some ease has won :  
—Yet, oh think, was this well done,  
Was it with thine own heart well,  
When in it such thoughts could dwell ?  
If thy spirit had drawn breath  
In the worlds of loftiest faith,  
Couldst thou have been so deceived ?—  
Wouldst thou not have then believed  
Everything on earth a lie  
Ere thy lady’s purity ?

## V.

Lo ! a woman strangely fair,  
With her wildly-streaming hair,  
All alone, companionless,  
In a savage wilderness :—  
Now she kneels with arms stretched out,  
Now she strangely roams about ;  
Underneath a thorn-tree’s shade  
Wailing infant she has laid,  
Like another Hagar flying,  
That she may not see him dying.  
—‘ From that cry—that cry of pain—  
Still I flee, but still in vain :  
Whither, whither shall I fly ?  
All the fountains are drawn dry  
Of my bosom utterly ;  
With its milk my child at first,  
Till that wholly failed, I nursed :

Then the blood away it drew,  
And now that has failed me too.  
Oh ! what helps it that the twain,  
Who were charged to end my pain,  
Have withheld the murderous knife  
From my own and infant's life,  
(While I promised never more  
To appear men's eyes before,)  
If they leave us here to die  
With a longer agony ?  
—O my husband, other thought  
Was it that within me wrought,  
Then when from my height of place  
Fell I to that strange disgrace,  
And that scorn extreme must prove :  
In thy faith and in thy love  
Found I still a refuge strong  
From that uttermost of wrong.  
'Twas enough the hours were flowing,  
'Twas enough the days were going,  
That would bring thee to my side,  
All that dark mist scattering wide.  
—God and Saviour ! and thine ear  
Doth it not our crying hear ?  
God and Saviour ! is thine eye  
Closed on our misery ?  
Are the springs of love divine  
Dry as are these breasts of mine ?  
When my little one has died,  
What have I on earth beside ?'

Round she gazed, if anywhere  
Dawned a glimpse of comfort there :  
Not a human step was near,  
Not a human voice to cheer,  
And no Angel-comforter  
In her anguish spake to her.



Oh ! how darkly desolate,  
Oh ! how full of scorn and hate  
At that moment seemed all nature—  
Every mute and senseless creature ;  
All upon her misery  
Gazing with un pitying eye.  
Danced the light leaves in the air,  
As deriding her despair ;  
Echoes came in idle mocks,  
Tossed from the unfeeling rocks ;  
Merrily the stream tripped on,  
Gloriously the gay sun shone,  
Stretched the breadth of azure sky  
Like a banner upon high :  
But no pity anywhere  
Might she find, no love, no care :  
Dark the earth, forlorn of love,  
But, oh ! darker heaven above—  
God's own heaven seemed darker yet.  
But this deadliest thought is met :  
She hath prayed, and doth repel  
This the deadliest shaft of hell ;  
She hath prayed, and not in vain :  
Faith returns to her again ;  
And when now the feeble crying,  
The faint moanings of the dying,  
Faint and fainter, wholly cease,  
God she thanks that all is peace ;  
That her infant findeth rest  
On a loving Saviour's breast.  
She with all is reconciled ;  
Once will look upon her child,  
Then its little body lay  
In the deepest grave she may.

Near she draws, and yet more near,  
Not a stirring may she hear :

But what other sight her eyes  
Welcomed with a glad surprise !  
Near the boy a gentle doe  
Knelt, as white as mountain snow,  
And with eager lips the child  
From that loving creature mild  
Drew the sweetest nourishment,  
Which, for its own offspring sent,  
Now to him it freely lent.  
When the mother from above  
Bent on him her looks of love,  
He at length began to stir,  
Did his little hands to her  
Stretch, and turn in gladsome wise  
On her face his laughing eyes ;  
What sweet tears from hers were shed !  
What new faith in her was bred !  
Here will she abide, until  
Life shall finish, and life's ill.  
Housing in a hollow cave,  
Shelter when the wild winds rave ;  
Here, where God this grace did send,  
She will calmly wait the end.

## VI.

Blindly, blindly, in the dark  
Welters now his spirit's bark,  
Who has blotted from his heaven  
All the lights to guide him given,  
So that now there doth endure  
Unto him no good, no pure,  
And no virtue seemeth sure ;  
While the fairest form wherein  
Goodness did a body win,  
Leprous all have showed with sin ;

While the Star which he well nigh  
Worshipped, where it shone on high,  
Suddenly has left its height,  
Traucherous meteor of the night.  
Round his path is darkness spread ;  
But what thicker night is shed  
Then, when he is undeceived,  
And has all the web unweaved  
Of that hateful treachery,  
Of that foul and hideous lie ;  
When the traitor owns his guilt  
And his blood is justly spilt—  
And a murderer *thou* dost stand,  
With her blood upon thy hand !  
Oh ! what profits now the force  
Of thy measureless remorse ?  
What thy soul's strong agonies ?  
What thy tears of blood, thy cries  
Underneath the midnight skies ?  
What a thousand anguished years,  
An eternity of tears ?  
All were profitless to rue  
What a single hour could do.  
Wilt thou call her from the tomb ?  
Wilt thou bid her from the gloom  
Of that forest, where she lies  
Hidden deep from human eyes ?  
Faithful mother ! truest wife !  
Hardly she sustains her life  
In that wasteful wilderness :  
Oh unparalleled distress !  
Who that paints it to his thought,  
Would not unto tears be brought ?  
She, a child of Flanders' Earl,  
Lacking what the meanest churl,

Poorest beggar that did wait  
At her sire's or husband's gate,  
Had not lacked,—of which bereft  
She had not the meanest left.  
Changed she has her palace dome  
For a cave of damp and gloom ;  
Maidens wait not her about,  
But wild beasts go in and out ;  
And no other music more  
Knows she than their sullen roar ;  
For a soft and downy bed  
Sticks are underneath her spread ;  
She has left her dainty food  
For the harsh roots of the wood ;  
Pearls she has not ; in their place  
Tears are on her woe-worn face :  
Only jewels now she knew  
Were the drops of chilly dew,  
Hanging on the pointed thorn :  
This is now her state forlorn.

While the days are summer-long  
Then her pains are not so strong ;  
While the days are summer-warm,  
She may shield her child from harm.  
Oh ! but when the leaves now sere  
Told of pitiless winter near,  
How she shuddered then to know  
What she soon must undergo !  
Ill with her it then did fare,  
Then her pains were hard to bear.  
She must melt within her mouth  
Ice, when she would slake her drouth ;  
When her hunger would allay,  
Must the hard snow scrape away,  
Till the roots at length she found,  
Buried deep in frozen ground.

How amid the long nights dark,  
When the cold was stiff and stark,  
When the icy north-wind blew,  
Keen sword, piercing through and through,  
Searching, as it fiercely drave,  
Every corner of the cave,  
Oh ! how then that mother pressed  
Her poor shiverer to her breast.  
Though no moisture that could give,  
Warmth not any there did live ;  
And herself forgetting quite,  
Wailed for that poor shuddering wight ;  
Who, beholding her to weep,  
And that long low wail to keep,  
Wailed and wept himself as well,  
Though his grief he could not tell.

Yet amid her keenest ill,  
She in God found comfort still ;  
And when day by day the doe  
Through the ice and through the snow  
Came—a constant visitant,  
To that poor child ministrant,—  
Blest assurance, token clear  
Of his grace she welcomed here :—  
It may be, now thanked Him more  
Than she ever thanked before,  
Could his wondrous guidance praise.  
That had from the world's vain ways,  
From its flatteries and its wiles,  
From its heart-deluding smiles  
Her delivered, and had brought,  
By rough paths she had not sought—  
But which now she could discern,  
And their gracious meaning learn—  
To this shelter safe, though stern.

## VII.

Mourned this painful hermitess  
Of the lonely wilderness,—  
Lowly kneeling, mourned one day,  
Did with eyes uplifted pray,  
In a trance-like agony  
Sunken, when she seemed to see,  
From that bright superior coast,  
One of its angelic host  
Stooping toward her ;—awful fear  
In his visage did appear,  
And his front was bent before  
That which in his hand he bore :  
Only hands of Angels aught  
Lovely as that cross had wrought,  
With the image there suspended,  
In which Love and Death contended :  
And this cross he reached to her,—  
This angelic comforter ;  
And her agony beguiled  
With these soothing words and mild  
‘ Genoveva, take thou this,  
Take it for the boon it is.  
Choicest blessing, costliest boon,  
That God’s treasure-house doth own,  
Gift He keepeth for his friends,  
And to thee at this time sends.  
Hither be thy glances sent,  
When thy soul with pangs is rent ;  
Set on this thine eyes and heart,  
When impatient movements start ;  
This shall as a shield repel  
All the fiery darts of hell ;  
This shall prove a golden key,  
Heaven unlocking unto thee.’

Was it vision ? was it truth ?  
Dream, or very waking sooth ?  
Did a heavenly Messenger,  
Did an Angel talk with her ?  
She hath started from her trance,  
Round she flings a timorous glance ;  
There doth no one now appear  
By her side, far off or near :  
Yet in rocky niche upright,  
Plain before her waking sight,  
Lo ! a crucifix—it stands  
Beauteous, as if angel hands  
Had that ivory work divine  
Wrought into salvation's sign.  
This in summer she alway  
Did adorn with flowery may,  
Ever decked it as she could  
With the wild flowers of the wood ;  
Nor in barest winter left  
Of all ornament bereft,  
But with mosses would entwine,  
Or with dark unfading pine.  
Here her solace found she still  
In extremities of ill,  
In her Saviour's five wounds laid  
All her griefs, her anguish stayed :  
Here, when once she did complain,  
Uttering words of hasty pain,  
' Jesu, Saviour, what is this ?  
What have I so much amiss  
Wrought, how sinnèd against Thee  
More than all, that I should be  
For a vile adulteress  
Driven into this wilderness,  
To this anguish and this shame ?'

Seemed it then that accents came  
From that cross, and named her name !  
'Genoveva, is it well  
At my chastening to rebel?  
Are thy sufferings more than mine?  
Or had I more guilt than thine?  
Yet was I put forth from heaven,  
By my Father I was given  
To my cross and mortal woe :  
Look on Me, and looking, so  
Learn to bear thy present ill,  
And what thou must suffer still.'  
This her Saviour's mild rebuke  
To her heart with shame she took,  
And no word of discontent,  
Whatsoever griefs He sent,  
Did she ever speak again,  
But her passion and her pain  
Did with meekest heart sustain,  
Yea, did welcome and approve  
For the gifts of highest love.

Then she found how wildest creatures —  
How the wild wood's savage natures  
At Heaven's bidding could be made  
Ministers to yield her aid ;  
Came the wolf, yet not to harm,  
But a shaggy sheepskin warm  
In his teeth one day he bore :  
This he cast the child before,  
In its woolly folds henceforth  
Shielded from the bitterest north ;  
And the beasts to him grew tame,  
Round him without fear they came ;  
Came the gentle creatures near,  
Without fierceness, without fear ;  
As he wandered through the wood,



With their speaking gestures showed  
What were harmful herbs and good,—  
With the boy made pastime ; he  
Of the wilderness was free—  
Rode upon the wolf, and played  
With the swift hare on the glade ;  
Round his head the birds would flit,  
On his hand the birds alit ;  
And the mother and the child  
Of their misery oft beguiled  
With melodious descants wild.  
And as he to more years grew  
Lacked she not some comfort new ;  
Sweetest words with him she changed,  
Whence her heart was oft estranged  
From the grief which on it lay,—  
Taught him in what words to pray,  
How he should ‘ Our Father ’ say,  
And his little hands above  
Lift unto a God of love,  
Who was watching for them still,  
Who, in midst of all their ill,  
For the desolate had cared :—  
Thus with them long while it fared.

## VIII.

But the Count, whom prosperous hours  
Back to his ancestral towers  
Bring, and to his widowed bowers,  
How shall he, this lone man, bear  
The approach and entrance there ?  
Lonely man ! though at his side  
Troops of friends and vassals ride ;  
Lonely man ! though at his gate  
Him ten thousand welcomes wait ;

Heart unwelcomed home, although  
Thousand voices skyward go ;  
Thousand voices fill the air,  
But the one is lacking there.  
How shall he endure to pace  
Those long echoing halls, and trace  
Each remembered happy place,  
Haunted each with its own ghost  
Of some ancient splendour lost,  
Each with its own vision bright  
Of some forfeited delight  
Rising clear upon his sight ?  
How beside a cold hearth stand,  
Quenched by his own reckless hand ?  
He has borne it, man forlorn !  
Borne—for all things may be borne ;  
And he lives, nor freedom asks  
From life's ordinary tasks,  
Him though oft the crowded hall,  
And the thronging festival,  
With that dreariest sense oppress  
Of a peopled wilderness ;  
Though the crowds that to and fro  
On their busy errands go,  
Ofttimes seem with all their tasks  
But so many gibbering masks ;  
Though he oft must contemplate  
The strange mockeries of fate,  
Which with hand profuse had shed  
Gifts so many on his head,  
Which had lent him splendour, fame,  
And a glory round his name,  
Honour, due to him whose hand  
Helped to free his native land,  
Yet withdrew the single thing  
Which to all a worth would bring.—

And the years give no relief,  
Mellowing an austerer grief :  
But a melancholy dim,  
Darker and darker, fell on him.  
Round him, when his state they knew,  
Friends and faithful kinsmen drew  
With consoling words and speech,  
Which his heart's wound cannot reach :  
Yet he strives not, when the morn  
They will greet with hawk and horn ;  
Still he yields a sad consent,  
Is with everything content,  
Feast, or chase, or tournament.  
' Brother,' so to him one day  
Did his faithful kinsman say—  
' Oft a milk-white hind is seen  
On that belt of tender green,  
Skirting the dark forest vast  
We so many times have past ;  
Seen it flieth, but with flight  
As it would pursuit invite ;  
Though remaining unpursued  
In that deep and haunted wood  
To this hour ;—with hound and horn  
We will rouse to-morrow morn :  
And methinks we shall not there  
Fail to find some quarry rare,  
That or other, which shall greet  
Friends that here to-morrow meet.'

## IX.

It is day ;—with hound and horn  
They have roused that morrow morn—  
Have the milk-white creature found  
On that edge of grassy ground—

And with eager steps pursued  
Far into the gloomy wood ;  
Till the hunters, one by one,  
By the length of way foredone  
Rein their steeds—but onward still,  
Thorough brake and over hill,  
Down steep glen, through foaming river,  
Doth Count Siegfried follow ever.  
Wild and wilder grows the scene,  
Seems it step of man hath been  
Never in this savage place :  
He too now foregoes the chase,  
For he sees another sight  
Which hath shook him with the might,  
Brave albeit, of strange affright.  
—‘ Who art thou, by none befriended,  
Only of that hind attended,  
Which has fled with steps so fleet  
To the refuge of thy feet—  
Housing in the desert’s heart,  
From all Christian souls apart?  
Who art thou? come forth and tell  
If a sprite of heaven or hell?’  
—‘ Shall I in thy sight appear,  
Cast me in thy mantle here,  
Else I cannot without blame  
Stand before thee ;’—forth she came  
Wrapt in it; there stood also  
By her side the fearless doe ;  
—‘ Here of free choice dwell I not,  
But have still my God besought  
He would guide of his good grace  
Human steps to this drear place.  
He has heard those prayers of mine,  
And has guided even thine.

What of me thou fain wouldst know,  
I too willingly will show—  
I this wretched and forlorn  
Woman, in Brabant was born ;  
No ignoble stock was mine,  
For I came of princely line ;  
But must find in worst distress  
Shelter in this wilderness,  
When my husband erringly  
Of my truth misdeemed, and me  
With my infant would have then  
Slain by hands of evil men.'

Then exceeding tremblings came  
Over all Count Siegfried's frame.  
On her face a fixed regard  
Turned he—that was all so marred  
He could read no history there—  
'But thy name and his declare ;'  
—'If my own self I have not,  
As the world has me, forgot,  
I am Genoveva hight.'  
From his steed he fell outright  
On the moment when she came  
To the syllabing that name,  
Down upon his face he fell,  
As by stroke invisible  
Earthward smitten—there lay long,  
And his sobs were thick and strong,  
Choking utterance—till his head  
He a little raising, said :  
'Genoveva, can it be  
That I now should look on thee,  
Thee, my own, my murdered wife,  
Genevieve, my love, my life ?  
Oh how wan ! how worn ! how weak !  
Oh that eye ! that sunken cheek !

Oh the utter misery  
That my guilt has brought on thee !  
Canst thou, Genevieve, forgive ?  
Wilt thou bid this wretch to live ?  
Low before thy feet I lie ;  
Thousand deaths if I should die,  
And in each a thousand years,—  
Drain my heart's blood out in tears,  
All were nothing to my sin—  
Then free pardon let me win :  
Pardon for his sake I crave,  
Who upon his cross forgave.'  
—' O my husband, all is past,  
God is good, and He at last  
Of his grace has brought this day.  
If thou wishest, I will say  
That I pardon—rise, oh rise !  
With these sobs and agonies  
Thou wilt kill my heart outright ;  
See too who appears in sight—  
O my sweet child, come, you may  
Fling those herbs and roots away.  
Fear not, sweetest, you will find  
That the man is good and kind.'  
—' Cause too just he has to fear ;  
Oh to think ye two were here  
All this while, and I so near !  
Thou, and he whom I am bold  
To a father's heart to fold.'

But enough, what words can tell  
Of a joy unspeakable ?—  
Of the transc'd long embrace,  
(In his bosom hid her face,)  
With its gush of mingling tears,  
Worth a thousand torturing years.

Others have arrived, to share  
In the holy gladness there ;

Through the forest tidings fly,  
And all draw in wonder nigh.  
Near her timidly they draw,  
And they kiss her feet in awe,  
While to them she doth appear  
Creature of another sphere.  
Faith they scarcely will afford  
To the assurance of the lord,  
'Tis their mistress lost so long,  
Overliving all her wrong.  
Now a litter is in haste  
Of green branches interlaced,  
And on it their lady borne,  
By her grief and joy outworn.  
Yet or ever from that spot,  
From that stern and rugged grot,  
Genoveva turned away,  
Lowly kneeling will she pay  
Thankful vows from grateful heart,  
Ere she from that cave depart,  
For the mercy and the grace  
Which had found her in that place,  
Kissed with tears the holy rood,  
Where in rocky niche it stood—  
—'Fare thee well!—I leave thee here  
For so many memories dear,  
Thou a shield that didst repel  
All the fiery darts of hell,  
Thou that wast a golden key,  
Heaven unlocking unto me.  
With these tears once more I say  
Fare thee well—I go away,  
But what here has been my gain  
May it with me still remain !'  
To the castle now doth hie  
A rejoicing company,

While from village and from town  
Others stream to meet them soon ;  
As in triumph one doth bear  
High in arms the new-found heir ;  
Round his head the glad birds flit,  
Singing on his hand they sit,  
Glad farewells they seem to sing,  
His new fortunes welcoming.  
Nor doth not the fearless doe  
In the glad procession go,  
Has its own peculiar dower  
In the glory of this hour :  
Round it shouting children press,  
Smooth its sides with fond caress,  
Kiss its face, and slender neck  
With their flowery garlands deck,  
While all praise the gentle hind,  
And its ministrations kind.

## X.

Joy is in Count Siegfried's bowers,  
Joy upon those ancient towers,  
Festal gladness in the room  
Of that weight of brooding gloom ;  
Nor doth she whose presence bright  
Chased the darkness of that night,  
Bringing back return of light,  
In this joy refuse her share :—  
Yet another, holier care  
Fills her heart—how best to keep  
Those heights difficult and steep,  
Which her spirit did attain  
In its years of desert pain—  
Him her pattern still to own,  
Wearer of the thorny crown.



To the Count, as more he knows,  
Ever loftier wonder grows  
At her saintly virtues high—  
Aye a sadder certainty,  
That he will not long retain  
His new-won and glorious gain.  
She doth meekly undertake  
All life's tasks for his dear sake ;  
Yet she evermore doth seem  
Like one moving in a dream,  
Or as one called back from death,  
Strangely drawing vital breath ;  
All so wondrous does the stir  
Of our life appear to her ;  
All so little to her mind  
Can she now its pageants find.  
And not many months have been,  
Ere of every eye 'tis seen  
That the hour is nearly come,  
When the weary one will home ;  
Ere too plain the work appears  
Of those cruel wasting years.  
Every day her pale pale face  
Wears a more unearthly grace :  
Angel wings are o'er her head,  
Angel feet about her bed :  
She doth catch in trances high  
Heaven's transcending harmony ;  
Enters by heaven's golden doors,  
Treads upon heaven's sapphire floors.  
And clear voices do not cease  
Warning her of near release—  
Sounds she may interpret well,  
Wherefore sent, and what they tell ;  
Yet to him will not impart,  
That she may not rend his heart :

For what anguish had they brought  
To his soul, who well had thought  
To atone that mighty wrong  
By a life of service long,  
By long years of service true  
And devotion ever new—  
But must now see torn and scattered,  
By this stroke for ever shattered,  
That fond vision, by whose art  
He had many times in part  
Spoken peace unto his heart.

## XI.

Gently speak and lightly tread,  
'Tis the chamber of the dead :  
Now thine earthly course is run,  
Now thy weary day is done,  
Genoveva, sainted one !  
Happy flight thy sprite has taken,  
From its plumes earth's last dust shaken ;  
On the earth is passionate weeping,  
Round thy bier lone vigils keeping, —  
In the heaven triumphant songs,  
Welcome of angelic throngs,  
As thou enterest on that day,  
Which no tears nor fears allay,  
No regrets nor pangs affray,  
Hemmed not in by yesterday,  
By to-morrow hemmed not in.  
Weep not for her—she doth win  
What we long for ; now is she  
That which all desire to be.  
Bear her forth with solemn cheer,  
Bear her forth on open bier,  
That the wonder which hath been  
May of every eye be seen.

Wonderful ! that pale worn brow  
Death hath scarcely sealed, and now  
All the beauty that she wore  
In the youthful years before,  
All the freshness and the grace,  
And the bloom upon her face,  
Ere that seven-year'd distress  
In the painful wilderness,  
Ere that wasting sickness came,  
Undermining quite her frame,  
All come back—the light, the hue  
Tinge her cheek and lip anew :  
Far from her, oh ! far away,  
All that is so quick to say,  
' Man returneth to his clay ;'  
All that to our creeping fear  
Whispers of corruption near.  
Seems it as she would illumine  
With her radiance and her bloom  
The dark spaces of the tomb.

## XII.

Once again thou art alone,  
From that other sorrow thrown  
All too quickly upon this :  
Oh, few days of fleeting bliss !  
Where shall they who fain would speak  
Comfort now, the mourner seek ?  
'Mid his old ancestral towers,  
His twice-desolated bowers ?  
On the battle-fields of Spain,  
Where the hardy Goths maintain  
Their Asturian mountains well,  
Thrusting back the infidel ?  
Rather in the deep recess  
Of a pathless wilderness,

Out of knowledge, out of sight,  
Seek a lonely eremite.  
Him has good Hidulphus blest,  
Praised his purpose, and his quest  
(Even before this life shall close)  
Of a place of sure repose.  
So a church in that wild wood  
Rises, where that cross had stood :  
Underneath the altar high  
Genoveva's relics lie :  
And that cross, of Angel hands  
Wrought, above the altar stands.  
He, within a rugged grot,  
In the very self-same spot  
Where she saw those cruel years,  
Where she wept those many tears,  
Dwells—where Genoveva dwelt,  
Kneels—where Genoveva knelt ;  
From the self-same spring doth take  
Water for his thirst to slake,  
Often knows no other food  
Than the wild roots of the wood ;  
Well content to undergo  
Some small portion of the woe,  
Which so long he made her know,  
There he waits for his release,  
There in God finds perfect peace :—  
Till the long years end at last,  
And he too at length has past  
From the sorrow and the fears,  
From the anguish and the tears,  
From the desolate distress  
Of this world's great loneliness,  
From the withering and the blight,  
From the shadow of its night,  
Into God's pure sunshine bright.

## THE STEADFAST PRINCE.

‘Only the best composed and worthiest hearts  
God sets to act the hard’st and constant’st parts.’—DANIEL

### PART I.

OF all the princes that in lofty place  
With lowly virtues did adorn’d stand  
Whom better did these lowly virtues grace  
Than all their worldly state, might none demand  
A nobler meed of praise than Ferdinand,  
Brother of him whose sceptre ruled of old,  
Where Tagus pours its waves o’er sands of gold.

He knew no higher gladness than to tend  
The poor, the needy, whom uncomforted  
Not ever from his portals he would send,  
Whom sick he watched beside contagious bed,  
And whom an-hungered his large bounty fed ;  
While loving words made ever doubly prized  
The gracious acts which he for all devised.

And only was he rigid and severe  
With his own self, his weak frame chastening still  
With long-drawn fasts and discipline austere,  
With vigils which the long night-watches fill :  
Yet leaving not to gain all knightly skill  
In lists of arms, arrayed in knightly weeds,  
Against some coming day of martial deeds.

For like a clear flame in his bosom burned,  
As on a holy altar, fiery zeal,  
Though not for meeds of earthly fame he yearned,  
Nor willingly for these had bared his steel ;  
But greatly longed some land that now might feel  
The yoke of misbelieving men, once more  
To his Redeemer's kingdom to restore.

He, long restricted to unwelcome ease,  
To see renewed his father's glories yearned,  
Who with two hundred vessels crossed the seas,  
And for himself a noble title earned,  
As first who to the infidels returned  
The wrongs they wrought on Spain, and with high hand  
Made Ceuta his, the key of all their land.

Oh day, when many a heart beat high and fast,  
When his exultingly did bound and leap,  
For that, despaired of long, was come at last ;  
Once more a gallant host was on the deep,  
And every vessel did its due course keep  
For Afric, and at each prow unconfined  
A red-cross banner fluttered in the wind.

Far off, that fleet might seem a wandering troop  
Of huge sea-monsters, gambolling at will  
Upon the topmost surge ; or clouds that stoop  
And lean on ocean's breast, themselves to fill  
With water which they back in rain distil ;  
Or flock of snow-white sea-birds, that expand  
Huge never-wearied pinions, far from land.

Or now he might that goodly sight compare,  
Who saw it from afar, to forest vast  
In motion, that did all its pines upbear—  
They tossing their tall heads, as every mast  
Now rose, now yielded to the unsteady blast ;  
Or might have deemed them, proudly thus advancing,  
A city on the inconstant billows dancing.

Oh joy, when they, by tempests unassailed,  
Set their firm feet upon the Libyan shore,  
While loud and clear the holy hymn prevailed,  
Which ofttimes heard in Palestine before,—  
‘The standards of the King advance,’—once more  
Filled now the air, and seemed the prelude high  
Of near success and certain victory.

—Long were it and a mournful task to tell  
How this fair dawn of triumph was defaced  
With wrack of envious clouds, and how befell,  
And by whose fault, that with untimely haste  
They were entangled in the desert waste ;  
Wherein they deeper day by day were led,  
Still deeming that the foe before them fled ;

Till when the scorching heat of Afric’s sun,  
With alternating dews of chilly night,  
And pain and travail had their office done,  
And theirs already was an evil plight,  
A dawning morning showed them every height  
Crowned with innumerable hosts, that hemmed their way,  
Then rushed to seize an unresisting prey.

Yet did not then that instant peril tame  
The courage of that high heroic band :  
The bold Crusaders, worthy that high name,  
With dauntless front from morn to evening stand ;  
Although when darkness did at length command  
Brief truce from arms, the boldest needs must own  
That to retrace their steps remained alone.

Back to their ships they wound in sad retreat,  
Enveloped ever in a fiery cloud  
Of dust and burning sand, which by their feet  
Stirred, hung around them like a dismal shroud :  
And choked by agony of thirst, they crowd  
Round scanty desert wells, and thence in vain  
Strive to assuage their fierce and torturing pain.

The hopes of triumph now had quite departed,  
But an austerer glory still remained,—  
Still to abide 'mid failing hearts high-hearted ;  
And though the light that lit their path had waned  
And by no hope of victory sustained,  
Still to do well what still was to be done ;—  
The Prince amid defeat this glory won.

But ever as they drew the shore more near,  
And as each ship received its living freight,  
The Moorish squadrons on their feeble rear  
And their diminishing ranks with added weight,  
With louder cries and more tumultuous hate,  
Thronged, pressing on more fiercely and more fast :  
He who had been the first, was now the last.



He fain the last would quit the hostile shore,  
Who leaped the foremost on its fatal strand :  
Around him throng the Moors, behind, before :  
Of those true-hearted that beside him stand  
Some fall in death—the noble Ferdinand,  
(Skill, courage, and despair alike in vain,)  
In the foe's hands a captive must remain.

—‘Not in ignoble bondage, nor for long,  
If Christian hearts can worth or valour prize,  
O gallant Prince, shalt thou endure this wrong,  
This unbecoming yoke, which on thee lies ;’  
With such well-sounding gentle courtesies  
The Mauritanian king him greeted fair,  
When of his prisoner's high estate aware.

‘To-morrow a swift ship shall cleave the main,  
Bearing this message to the Tagus' shore,  
That freedom shall to thee be given again,  
If Ceuta will thy brother hold no more,  
But unto us its rightful lords restore ;  
This for a brother will not be denied :  
Meanwhile with me, my guest thou shalt abide.’

Frank recognition of his grace the Prince  
Rendered again—yet did not, when he heard  
Of that so near deliverance, joy evince,  
Nor of that ransom answered he a word :  
Only it seemed some thought within him stirred,  
That some large thought was stirring in his breast,  
Which he had well-nigh spoke and then repress.

But now there waned not many moons, before  
By favouring breezes wafted o'er the sea  
They came, the prompt ambassadors that bore  
Large powers to set the princely captive free ;  
Whom at this cost did ransom willingly  
His loving brother, and did only yearn  
That he should hasten his desired return.

And all seemed finished now, when 'Hear me,' cried  
The Prince—'hear *me*, although a captive thrall :  
Ye know that if my brother childless died,  
Mine would be then the throne of Portugal :  
While this is so, no power has he at all  
Aught of its state to alienate or lose,  
Unless with my consent, which I refuse.

'Shall that fair city, on whose walls my sire  
With his own hands first planted the five shields  
Of Portugal—shall Ceuta, glorious hire  
Of labours long on stormy battle-fields,  
Which o'er this land such broad dominion wields,  
Be in a moment bartered for one poor  
And worthless life ? who would such thought endure !

\* Its golden crosses glittering in the air,  
Shall they give place to crescents foul and pale ?  
And for glad bells that call to Christian prayer,  
The muezzin's melancholy voice prevail,  
Bidding to impious rites ? and at the tail  
Of horses shall our images divine  
Be dragged ?—to stables turned each sacred shrine ?

‘No—rather if just ransom thou for me,  
Such as a faithful man can pay, refuse,  
And for my partners in captivity,—  
For I not any liberty will use,  
In which they share not,—then I rather choose  
Of this poor life whatever may remain,  
Till death release, to spend in captive pain.’

More he had said, but him the Moorish king  
Not suffered to proceed—‘And dost thou ween  
To find captivity that easy thing,  
Which by my grace it hitherto has been?  
While thou in me this grace hast only seen,  
Without thine harm thou thinkest to despoil  
Us of the just reward of all our toil.

‘O fool, to think I have no power nor will  
To make thy bondage bitter unto thee!  
That I with gall and wormwood cannot fill  
Brimming the cup of thy captivity!  
Thou art my slave; a slave’s lot thine shall be,  
Labour and pains—and, harder to be borne,  
Insult and ignominy, stripes and scorn.

‘But when, sore laden with thy shameful task,  
Of thy long bondage thou shalt weary be,  
And when ’mid basest labours thou shalt ask  
For pity, ask it of thyself—not me:  
For thou dost in thine own hands hold the key  
Of thine own prison: yield to me that place,  
Else shalt thou vainly crave the poorest grace.

‘And ye, that did your bootless message bring,  
Go back and say what sight these lands afford—  
A Christian prince, the brother of your king,  
Tending the horses of his Moorish lord.  
Come and redeem him with the spear and sword,  
If ye are minded once again to try  
The welcome of our Moslem chivalry.’

By this from off his shoulders rudest men  
Had torn his decent robes, and garmented  
In prison-dress of coarsest serge, and then  
Him to his task dishonourable led,  
He nought resisting—only this he said,  
‘If that herein there be dishonour, thine  
Is the dishonour and the shame, not mine.’

And his companions each and all were borne  
One way or other to some servile toil,  
‘Mid blows and curses and tumultuous scorn,—  
Whom all were free to buffet and to spoil,  
Until they wet that cruel Afric soil  
With mingled blood and tears, and scarcely thought  
They would with life to that day’s end be brought :

So that when they were thrust in harshest wise  
Into a noisome vault at that day’s close,  
That noisome vault appeared a paradise,  
Because it gave some shelter from the blows,  
The taunts and insults of their cruel foes—  
Because its bars and iron-strengthened gate  
Rose strong between them and that clamorous hate.

But when there lacked not of their number one,  
The Prince so joyed, as though he found reward  
For all the suffering he that day had known :  
Yet when a light permitted to regard  
Their garments rent, swoln hands, and faces marred,  
He, strong before all weakness to restrain,  
Not any longer might from tears refrain.

—‘ Dear friends, that I have dragged you down with me  
Into this gulf of woe, this makes my smart ;  
That of this suffering and captivity  
I may not for myself claim every part :  
Oh this it is that causes my weak heart  
To die within me ;—tell me you forgive  
Only this wrong, and I again shall live.’

Nothing they spake ; but of that faithful band  
One after other rising from his place,  
Drew near, and knelt, and kissed the Prince’s hand,  
As though that hand dispersed all gifts and grace :  
He raised and wound them in a strict embrace  
One after other—‘ Brothers of my heart,  
Henceforth for good or ill we never part.’

—‘ Oh, wish us not then any more away,  
Our dear dear lord ; nor grudge to us our share  
In this high suffering ’—so they all did say—  
‘ What could we ask more goodly or more fair  
Than that when men hereafter shall declare  
Thy noble patience, they should then as well  
Of us thy servants and true comrades tell ?’

But he to them—‘ We know not what shall be,  
Nor whither these things tend ; if that we bore  
To-day of outrage and indignity  
Be but the first and least, and far, far more,  
Yea, mortal suffering be for us in store ;  
Or if, when God awhile our faith has proved,  
All suffering shall from us be then removed.

‘ But He who knoweth that we hither came  
Not in the lust of spoil, nor heat of pride,  
Nor with the hope to win ourselves a name,  
But the dear faith of Christ to spread more wide,  
Can give us strength in patience to abide,  
Till one way or another grief has end ;  
Then let us unto Him our cause commend.’

What of the night remained, when thus the smart  
Of their new bleeding wounds had been allayed  
With the sweet balm of loving words, in part  
Was spent in prayer ; they lowly kneeling made  
Their supplications unto God for aid ;  
And then they did their weary eyelids close  
In brief oblivion of all earthly woes.

In dreams they wandered by familiar places  
In their own land, unto their childhood dear ;  
And some were locked in loving fond embraces,  
And sweet the voices of their home and clear  
Came to them ;—pain was gone, and doubt and fear ;  
And all the dreary and the dread between  
Was gone, like something which had never been.

What happy dreams, blest visions without number,  
Were scattered by their rude tormentors' tone,  
Snapping in twain the golden links of slumber !  
Then each poor captive staggering rose, as one  
From off whose heart there had been rolled a stone  
A little moment—to return again  
With added weight, a sense of hopeless pain.

And this their mournful life continued long  
Without a change, unless when some new day  
Brought with it some new insult or new wrong,  
Sharp taunt or scorn, which they might not gainsay,  
Nor seem to feel ; which if one did repay  
With but an angry look, he then would find  
That there was worse and keener still behind.

But oh ! what gladness was it when they met,  
The long day's miserable task-work o'er,  
In their dank vault, and shared the black bread set,  
With water from dank pools drawn, them before :  
Then made they of that coarse and scanty store  
A glorious meal, for love makes all things sweet,  
And it is always joy when brethren meet.

Yet oft the wantonness of fell despite  
Would grudge them this poor respite of their woes ;  
And then harsh voices in the middle night,  
Just as their leaden eyelids 'gan to close,  
And their tired limbs were sinking to repose,  
Would bid them forth, and task them to renew  
The past day's work, or merely to undo.

Yet amid all still kept his constant mind,  
Not to be wearied out by toil or pain,  
Or all which malice could of outrage find,  
The Steadfast Prince ; on him were spent in vain  
All shafts of malice—able to sustain  
Not his own heart alone, but aye to speak  
Strength to the fainting, courage to the weak.

But if they cursed their foes, or wished them dead,  
With gentle words, but firm, he would put down  
Such evil thoughts :—‘ Shall we be angered  
With them that help us to a martyr’s crown?  
Shall we not rather our tormentors own  
As scourges with which God doth scourge our sin,  
And far unhappier than are we therein?

‘ Your curses cannot harm them, but can make  
Of your own hearts a hell instead of heaven ;  
The healing virtue from affliction take,  
And mar all gracious ends for which ’twas given.  
With mortal men ye gloriously have striven ;  
A harder task remains you—to oppose  
Revenge and scorn and hate, far deadlier foes.’

Yet once, what time the others sleeping lay,  
To one, an aged and faithful servant true,  
Who, though he ’scaped that last disastrous day,  
Yet when his lord’s captivity he knew,  
To share his bondage and his sufferings flew,—  
He once unto this faithful servant old  
More of his inmost bosom did unfold :



‘ To these, my poor companions, seem I strong,  
And at some times such am I, as a rock  
That has upstood in middle ocean long,  
And braved the winds’ and waters’ angriest shock,  
Counting their fury but an idle mock :  
Yet sometimes weaker than the weakest wave  
That dies about its base, when storms forget to rave.

‘ I from my God such strength have sometimes won,  
That all the dark dark future I am bold  
To face ;—but oh ! far otherwise anon,  
When my heart sinks and sinks to depths untold,  
Till being seems no deeper depth to hold,  
Unfathomed by the line of my despair ;  
And with my spirit so it now doth fare.

‘ O God, that I had fall’n with them who fell  
In that disastrous conflict by Tangiers !  
O happy you, my brethren, ending well !  
O not to be lamented with such tears  
As we, condemned to waste inglorious years  
In this captivity, which shall extend,  
Without release, unto life’s utmost end !

‘ Yet is not here the answer to my prayer ?  
For I remember when upon my nod  
Men waited, and the world did speak me fair,  
Then thinking on my Saviour and my God,  
And on the thorny path of life He trod  
With bleeding feet, deep shame would fill my heart,  
That I should in his sufferings bear no part.

‘And then in secret prayed I earnestly  
That I might to some likeness with my Lord  
Be brought—not courted, praised, and honoured be,  
While He was scorned, and buffeted, and gored  
With cruel wounds ; I knew my prayer was heard,  
Though on what side affliction would appear,  
I strove in vain to guess ;—now all is clear.’

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## PART II.

WHAT man shall say that he the deepest deep  
Has reached, whereto misfortune may him bring?  
That never from her fatal urn may leap  
A lot inscribed with heavier suffering  
Than that he knows ? that now of everything  
Which sweetens life his life is stripped so bare,  
That worse with him henceforth it cannot fare ?

Not he, who had been hurled with impulse rude  
Down from the honourable high estate  
Wherein observed and revered once he stood ;  
He yet must be misfortune’s trustier mate—  
Must lie exposed to keener shafts of fate :  
He, knowing much of ill, must find that more,  
Bitterer and sharper, is for him in store.

For now his foes, by malice partly moved,  
Because they saw it solaced him to share  
All griefs and labours which the others proved ;  
And how that all, though oft they threatened were,  
And punished for their deed, yet still would bear  
To him all reverence and respect, and bring  
Homage to him as to a crown'd king ;—

And partly, for they dreaded lest his frame,  
Which had been ever tender, weak, and frail,  
And evidently weaker now became  
With each succeeding day, should wholly fail,  
Nor longer to sustain itself avail ;—  
Lest it should sink beneath its cruel toil,  
And them of all their promised gain despoil ;—

They now denied him the sad liberty  
To share whatever pains the others knew :  
Shut in a narrow dungeon must he lie,  
Shut from their fellowship and service true ;  
There he his resolution high may rue,  
If ever ruth on high and noble deeds,  
Whatever consequence they bring, succeeds.

Oh dreary months ! months growing into years,  
Which o'er their heads, bringing no respite, passed ;  
And they must mingle still their drink with tears,  
While fell upon them thicker and more fast  
The shafts of anguish ;—yet for him at last,  
The noblest sufferer of this suffering band,  
The hour of his deliverance was at hand.

For once, when they as usual passed before  
His vault, and softly called him, no reply  
Might they obtain ;—but listening at the door,  
They only heard him breathing heavily,  
And caught at intervals a long-drawn sigh ;  
Till, more times called, he faintly did desire  
Who called to know, and what they might require.

—‘ Oh ! fares it, dearest lord, so ill with thee,  
That now thou dost no more our voices know,  
Who once couldst tell us each from each, if we  
Did but so much as near thy dungeon go,  
Bound on our weary errands to and fro ? ’  
—‘ Oh pardon me, my friends,—my extreme pain  
Hath robbed me of all sense and dulled my brain.

‘ But go and say in what an evil case  
I find me now ;—perchance they will relent  
So far that I may in this noisome place,  
For my short time remaining, not be pent ;  
Or at my prayer they will at least consent  
That one of you may now continue nigh,  
And watch beside me—for, dear friends, I die.’

To the king’s presence straight they forced their way,  
Regardless of what dangers they might meet :  
Before him prone upon the earth they lay ;  
They kissed the very ground beneath his feet,  
Laying the dust with tears, and did entreat  
In anguish that their lord might not be left  
Unhelped to perish, of all aid bereft.

But little might they find of pity there ;  
New insults and new taunts were all they won ;  
These, with rude blows, their only answer were :  
—‘ Back to your tasks, ye Christian dogs—begone—  
Away ! from me compassion finds he none :  
Let him upon himself compassion show ;  
I swear, by heaven, he shall no other know !

‘ What, shall ye come in arms to waste our land,  
God’s people to extirpate shall ye come,  
And then, when it fares ill with you, demand  
Our pity ?—no ; accept your righteous doom,  
O fools ! that in your own land had not room  
To dwell—that had not strength to conquer ours ;  
Fools, whose desires so far outstrip your powers !

‘ Where are they now, that with the fire and sword  
Our land to harry were so free of old ?  
Can they no pity to your Prince afford ?  
Where is your King, and where your captains bold ?  
Or has it not in Portugal been told  
What here is done, and what by him is borne  
Of shame and outrage, and of extreme scorn ?’

It seemed that from those votaries of Mahound  
All love, all mercy quite had fled away ;  
Yet in one heart this much of grace they found,  
That when their tasks were ended of the day,  
He who the dungeon where the sufferer lay  
Kept, unto them consented to afford  
A brief communion with their dying lord.

Admitted there, from cries and loud lament,  
Untimely now, they scarcely could refrain ;  
Fain would they with their shrieks the vault have rent ;  
They knelt beside him, kissed his hands, the chain  
That on his wasted limbs did still remain ;  
They cast themselves the dungeon-floor along,  
And tore their beards, and did their faces wrong.

Sobs choked their utterance wholly, to behold  
The lineaments so marred and so defaced,  
Which they had loved and revered so of old.  
He too was deeply moved, but sooner chased  
The weakness from him, and with calm replaced :  
Then from the strawen pallet where he lay  
Himself a little raising, thus did say :—

‘ If I sometimes an earnest hope have fed,  
That I might breathe again my native air,  
And tread my native soil, this wish was bred  
By the desire I cherished to prepare  
For you such honourable shelter there,  
As could none other do, who did not know  
How truly you have served me in my woe.

‘ For had I sate a king upon my throne,  
All wealth, all honour waiting on mine eye,  
You never could have truer service shown  
Than you *have* shown me in my misery—  
Nor I from any found more loyalty,  
Than that which I have found upon your parts,  
O children dear, O true and faithful hearts.

‘ And now that I am hastening to my rest,  
One only thought of trouble doth employ  
My soul, that I am leaving you opprest  
With this huge weight of woe ;—the perfect joy  
My bosom feels, knows only this alloy,  
That many, when my lips are sealed in death,  
Will seek to draw you from your holy faith.

‘ But oh ! whatever of worst ill betide,  
Choose not this manner to evade your woe :  
Be true to God ; on Him in faith abide,  
And sure deliverance you at length shall know ;  
It may be that some path his hand will show  
To your dear earthly homes ; or He will shape  
For you at length my way of glad escape.

‘ Be true to God ; forsake not Him, and you  
In all your griefs forsake He never will ;  
The true of heart have found Him ever true ;  
And this I say, who having known much ill,  
Do now affirm Him faithful to fulfil  
All promises—and boldly say that He  
In all my griefs hath not forsaken me.’

No more he spake ; but speechless sank, oppressed  
With the fierce fever that within him burned ;  
But oh ! what anguish then the hearts possessed  
Of that poor captive band, who weeping turned,  
And their dear lord, as now departed, mourned,—  
Forth filing from that vault a weeping train,  
Who had beheld him now, and should not see again.

Now seemed they desolate ; for he, although  
Helpless his dearest to defend with power  
From the least insult of the meanest foe,  
Had seemed to them a shelter and a tower  
Of refuge in affliction's fiercest hour,  
From his lone dungeon spreading broad above  
Their heads the buckler of his faith and love.

And still the tears flowed faster from their eyes,  
As each his fellow weeping did remind  
Of all his loving gentle courtesies,  
And gracious acts—how oft, as one that pined,  
Even ere that sickness took him, he declined  
His scanty portion of the food prepared,  
Which among them with this pretext he shared.

—‘ He knew our fetters’ clank, and with quick ear  
One from another by that mournful sound  
He could discern, nor ever passed we near  
His dungeon, on our weary labour bound,  
But he for us some words of comfort found,  
And still he begged us pardon him, as though  
Himself he owned the cause of all our woe.

‘ And what most grieved him, more than all he bore  
In his own person of injurious wrong,  
Piercing his very bosom’s inmost core,  
Was, if the tale was brought him that among  
Us, his dear children, there had strife upsprung,  
As sometimes did—for grief is quick and wild,—  
Then left he not, till we were reconciled.’



—Beside the Prince might only one remain  
In that unlighted vault the livelong night :  
Its earlier watches seemed of restless pain,  
Nothing he spake, but tossed from left to right,  
Like one who vainly did some ease invite ;  
Till when it verged toward morning, he that kept  
That anxious vigil deemed the sufferer slept :

Or sometimes feared he was already dead,  
So noiseless now that chamber's silence deep ;  
Yet ventured not to speak or stir, for dread  
Lest he should chase away that sweetest sleep  
Of morning, which comes over them that keep  
Pained watches through the night ;—till tardily  
The grey dawn broke, and he drew gently nigh.

When lo ! with folded palms the martyr lay,  
His eyes unclosed—and stood in each a tear,  
And round his mouth a sweeter smile did play  
Than ever might on mortal lips appear :  
No mortal joy could ever have come near  
The joy that bred that smile ; with waking eye  
He seemed to mark some vision streaming by.

Then feared to rouse him from that blessèd trance,  
And back again with noiseless step retired  
That good old man—nor nearer would advance,  
Though of his weal he gladly had inquired.  
He waited, and a long long hour expired,  
And it was silence still—when to his bed  
Him beckoning soft, the princely sufferer said :

‘What I shall speak, now promise that to none  
Of all my fellow captives shall be told ;  
That not till this poor body shall have gone  
The way of all the earth, thou wilt unfold  
My words, yea, evermore in silence hold,  
Unless hereafter should a time betide,  
When by the telling God were glorified.

‘Two hours or more before the spring of day  
As I within me mused how poor and leer  
This world, and as in pain I waking lay,  
Thought upon all the happy souls, that here  
Once suffered, but are now exempt from fear  
And pain and wrong, there woke within my breast  
A speechless longing for that heavenly rest.

‘Mine eyes were steadfastly toward the wall  
Turned, when I saw a wondrous vision there ;  
I saw a vision bright, majestic,  
One seated on a throne—and many fair  
And dazzling shapes before Him gathered were,  
With palms in hand ; such glory from his face  
Was shed, as lightened all this dismal place.

‘This dismal vault, this dungeon of deep gloom  
This sunless dwelling of eternal night,  
Which I have felt so long my living tomb,  
Showed like the court of heaven—so clear, so bright,  
So full of odours, harmonies and light :  
And music filled the air—a heavenly strain,  
That rose awhile, and then was hushed again.

‘ Then one came forward from that blessèd throng,  
And kneeled to Him, and said—“ Compassion take  
On this thy servant, who has suffered long  
Such great and heavy troubles for thy sake.  
We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou so soon wilt make  
Thy servant’s many woes to end, that he  
Into our choir admitted now will be.”

‘ When thus I heard him speak, I marked him well,  
And by his banner and his scales, I knew  
It was the great Archangel Michaël :  
And by his side there knelt another too,  
Who in one hand a chalice held in view,  
The other clasped a book, and there was writ,  
“ In the beginning was the Word,” in it.

‘ But then my Lord, my Saviour, turned to me,  
And with sweet smile ineffable He said,  
“ To-day thou comest hence, and shalt be free ! ”  
With music, as it came, then vanishèd  
The vision ; but within me it has bred  
Sweet comfort that remains, and now I know  
To-day I leave the world, and end my woe.

‘ My Lord, my God, what wondrous grace is this,  
That Thou hast not disdained to visit me,  
And give me tidings of my coming bliss ?  
Who am I, sinful man, so graced to be ?  
Oh, gladly will I bear whate’er by Thee  
May be appointed, ere my race be run,  
Of pain or travail—Lord, thy will be done

In calmest quiet, waiting his release,  
 When he had finished thus his prayer, he lay :  
 ' Lord, now Thou lettest me depart in peace,'  
 Were the last words which he was heard to say,  
 Upon his left side turning, as the day,  
 Slow sinking now with more than usual pride,  
 Streamed through the prison bars, a splendour deep and  
     wide.

When the last flush had faded from the west,  
 When the last streak of golden light was gone,  
 They looked, but he had entered on his rest ;  
 He too his haven of repose had won ;—  
 Leaving this truth to be gainsaid by none,  
 That what the legend on his shield did say,  
 That well his life had proved—*Le bien me plaît.*

### THE CROSS.

FROM CALDERON.

TREE, which Heaven has willed to dower  
 With that true fruit whence we live,  
 As that other, death did give ;  
 Of new Eden loveliest flower ;  
 Bow of light, that in worst hour  
 Of the worst flood signal true  
 O'er the world, of mercy threw ;  
 Fair plant, yielding sweetest wine ;  
 Of our David harp divine ;  
 Of our Moses tables new ;  
 Sinner am I, therefore I  
 Claim upon thy mercies make,  
 Since alone for sinners' sake  
 God on thee endured to die.

*ORPHEUS AND THE SIRENS.*

HIGH on the poop, with many a godlike peer,  
With heroes and with kings, the flower of Greece,  
That gathered at his word from far and near,  
To snatch the guarded fleece,

Great Jason stood ; nor ever from the soil  
The anchor's brazen tooth unfasten'd,  
Till, auspicating so his glorious toil,  
From golden cup he shed

Libations to the Gods, to highest Jove,  
To Waves and prospering Winds, to Night and Day,  
To all by whom befriended they might prove  
A favourable way.

With him the twins, one mortal, one divine,  
Of Leda, and the Strength of Hercules ;  
And Tiphys, steersman through the perilous brine,  
And many more with these :

Great father, Peleus, of a greater son,  
And Atalanta, martial queen, was here ;  
And that supreme Athenian, nobler none,  
And Idmon, holy seer :

Nor Orpheus pass unnamed, though from the rest  
Apart, he leaned upon that lyre divine,  
Which once in heaven his glory should attest,  
Set there, a sacred sign :

But when auspicious thunders pealed on high,  
Unto its chords and to his chant sublime  
The joyful heroes, toiling manfully,  
With measured strokes kept time.

Then when that keel divided first the waves,  
Them Chiron cheered from Pelion's piny crown,  
And wondering sea-nymphs rose from ocean caves,  
And all the Gods looked down.

The bark divine, itself instinct with life,  
Went forth, and baffled ocean's rudest shocks  
Eluding, though with pain and arduous strife,  
Those huge encountering rocks ;

And force and fraud o'ercome, and peril past,  
The hard-won trophy raised in open view,  
Through prosperous floods was bringing home at last  
Its high heroic crew ;

Till now they cried (Ææa left behind,  
And the dead waters of the Cronian main),  
'No peril more upon our path we find,  
Safe haven soon we gain :'

When, as they spake, sweet sounds upon the breeze  
Came to them, melodies till then unknown,  
And, blended into one delight with these,  
Sweet odours sweetly blown,—

Sweet odours wafted from the flowery isle,  
Sweet music breath'd by the Sirens three,  
Who there lie wait, all passers to beguile,  
Fair monsters of the sea !

Fair monsters foul, that with their magic song  
 And beauty to the shipman wandering  
 Worse peril than disastrous whirlpools strong,  
 Or fierce sea-robbers bring.

Sometimes upon the diamond rocks they leant,  
 Sometimes they sate upon the flowery lea  
 That sloped towa'd the wave, and ever sent  
 Shrill music o'er the sea.

One piped, one sang, one swept the golden lyre ;  
 And thus to forge and fling a threefold chain  
 Of link'd harmony the three conspire,  
 O'er land and hoary main.

The winds, suspended by the charm'd song,  
 Shed treacherous calm about that fatal isle ;  
 The waves, as though the halcyon o'er its young  
 Were always brooding, smile ;

And every one that listens, presently  
 Forgetteth home, and wife, and children dear,  
 All noble enterprise and purpose high,  
 And turns his pinnace here,—

He turns his pinnace, warning taking none  
 From the plain doom of all that went before,  
 Whose bones lie bleaching in the wind and sun,  
 And whiten all the shore.

He cannot heed,—so sweet unto him seems  
 To reap the harvest of the promised joy ;  
 The wave-worn man of such secure rest dreams,  
 So guiltless of annoy.

—The heroes and the kings, the wise, the strong,  
That won the fleece with cunning and with might,  
They too are taken in the net of song,  
Snared in that false delight ;

Till ever loathlier seemed all toil to be,  
And that small space they yet must travel o'er,  
Stretched, an immeasurable breadth of sea,  
Their fainting hearts before.

‘ Let us turn hitherward our bark,’ they cried,  
‘ And, bathed in blisses of this happy isle,  
Past toil forgetting and to come, abide  
In joyfulness awhile ;

‘ And then, refreshed, our tasks resume again,  
If other tasks we yet are bound unto ;  
Combing the hoary tresses of the main  
With sharp swift keel anew.’

O heroes, that had once a nobler aim,  
O heroes sprung from many a godlike line,  
What will ye do, unmindful of your fame,  
And of your race divine ?

But they, by these prevailing voices now  
Lured, evermore drew nearer to the land,  
Nor saw the wrecks of many a goodly prow,  
That strewed that fatal strand ;

Or seeing, feared not ; warning taking none  
From the plain doom of all that went before,  
Whose bones lay bleaching in the wind and sun,  
And whitened all the shore.



And some impel through foaming billows now  
The hissing keel, and some tumultuous stand  
Upon the deck, or crowd about the prow,  
Waiting to leap to land.

And them this fatal lodestar of delight  
Had drawn to ruin wholly, but for one  
Of their own selves, who swept his lyre with might,  
Calliope's great son.

He singing, (for mere words were now in vain,  
That melody so led all souls at will),  
Singing he played, and matched that earth-born strain  
With music sweeter still.

Of holier joy he sang, more true delight,  
In other happier isles for them reserved,  
Who, faithful here, from constancy and right  
And truth have never swerved ;

How evermore the tempered ocean gales  
Breathe round those hidden islands of the blest,  
Steeped in the glory spread, when daylight fails  
Far in the sacred West ;

How unto them, beyond our mortal night,  
Shines evermore in strength the golden day ;  
And meadows with purpureal roses bright  
Bloom round their feet alway ;

And plants of gold—some burn beneath the sea,  
And some, for garlands apt, the land doth bear,  
And lacks not many an incense-breathing tree,  
Enriching all that air.

Nor need is more, with sullen strength of hand  
To vex the stubborn earth, or cleave the main ;  
They dwell apart, a calm heroic band,  
Not tasting toil or pain.

Nor sang he only of unfading bowers,  
Where they a tearless painless age fulfil,  
In fields Elysian spending blissful hours,  
Remote from every ill ;

But of pure gladness found in temperance high,  
In duty owned, and reverenced with awe,  
Of man's true freedom, which may only lie  
In servitude to law ;

And how 'twas given through virtue to aspire  
To golden seats in ever-calm abodes ;  
Of mortal men, admitted to the quire  
Of high immortal Gods.

He sang—a mighty melody divine,  
Waking deep echoes in the heart of each—  
Reminded whence they drew their royal line,  
And to what heights might reach.

And all the while they listened, them the speed  
Bore onward still of favouring wind and tide,  
That when their ears were vacant to give heed  
To any sound beside,

The feeble echoes of that other lay,  
Which held awhile their senses thrall'd and bound,  
Were in the distance fading quite away,  
A dull unheeded sound.

## ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.

FROM THE FOURTH GEORGIC, 452—516.

Aristæus, all whose bees have perished by disease and hunger, inquires of Proteus the cause of this disaster and the remedy. Proteus replies :

NOT without wrath of heaven has thee this pest overtaken.

Great as thy plague was thy crime : his lost wife angrily mourning

Orpheus, meriting ill that grievous doom that befell him,  
Stirs (if no fates avert), for thee these righteous revenges.  
She, while she fled from thee in headlong haste and unwary,

Nigh to her death, that snake of folds enormous beheld not,

Coiled in the brake at her feet, and guarding the banks of the river.

But then the choir of her equals, the Dryads, with shrill lamentation

Filled the high mountain tops ; nor wanted voices of weeping

All o'er that rugged land, by Mars beloved ; and the rivers

Mourned, and with high Pangæum Athenian Orithyia.

He with his hollow shell his sick soul loving to solace,  
Thee on the lonely sea-shore, his sweetest partner, sang ever,

Thee when the day was breaking, and thee when the day  
had departed.  
Yea, and the jaws of hell, the high portals of Pluto's  
dominion,  
And that forest that glooms with a night of darkness and  
terror  
Ent'ring, he came to the ghosts, he came to the Monarch,  
the dreadful,  
Came to the hearts that know not to melt at man's sup-  
plication.  
But, disturbed by his song, from the lowest recesses of  
Hades  
Flitted the shadows thin, weak forms of the dwellers in  
darkness ;  
These than the birds not fewer, the thousands that hide  
in the branches,  
Evening them from the mountains or storms of winter  
compelling ;  
Matrons, and men of old, and bodies of glorious heroes,  
Left by the breath of life, and boys, and maidens un-  
married,  
And on the funeral pile youths stretched in the sight of  
their parents ;  
Whom the black slime all round, and the reed deform of  
Cocytus,  
Whom with its sullen tide that marsh unlovely confined  
there  
Keeps, and the river of hate with a ninefold girdle  
coerces.  
Yea, and astonished then Death's halls and secret pavilions  
Stood, and the Furies three, their locks with pale vipers  
enwoven ;  
While with his triple jaws stood Cerberus yawning, and  
hurt not ;  
And, by the storm undriven, stayed moveless the wheel  
of Ixion.

And now, retracing his path, he had every danger sur-  
mounted,  
And his beloved and restored to the upper air was ap-  
proaching,  
Pacing behind—for such was the law Proserpina gave  
them—  
When, too heedless a lover, him madness seized of a  
sudden,  
Such as might well find grace, if grace dwelt ever in  
Hades.  
His Eurydice he on the verge and confines of daylight,  
Too, too fond and forgetful ! must pause and look back  
on ; with that look  
Wasted was all his toil, and the laws of the tyrant re-  
morseless  
Broken ; the Stygian pools three times with a shrieking  
resounded.  
' Orpheus,' she cried, ' who thee and me has ruined, the  
wretched ?  
Whence this madness immense ? lo ! the cruel destinies  
call me  
Back, and my swimming eyes with a weight of slumber  
are sealing.  
And now adieu ; I am borne by a night of darkness sur-  
rounded,  
Stretching to thee,—ah, thine no longer,—the hands that  
are helpless.'  
Thus exclaimed she, and straight, like smoke that mingles  
in thin air,  
Out of his sight she vanished, another way fleeing ; nor  
ever  
Him idly grasping at shadows, and many things yearning  
to utter,  
Saw she again at all ; nor him hell's ferryman henceforth  
Suffered to pass that lake which each from the other  
divided.

What should he do, or whither, of wife twice widowed,  
 betake him ?  
 Move with what voice, what weeping, the powers of hell  
 or of heaven ?  
 Cold in the Stygian bark she already was crossing the  
 river :  
 Him they report for seven whole months in order un-  
 broken,  
 Under a lofty rock, by Strymon's desolate waters,  
 This among icy caves to have wept and weeping re-  
 counted ;  
 Soothing the tigers with song, and with song compelling  
 the forest ;  
 As when, mourning beneath some poplar shade, Philo-  
 mela  
 Wails for her ravished young, whom the cruel ploughman  
 observing  
 Has from the nest withdrawn, an unfledged brood ; but  
 the mother  
 Grieves on a bough all night, her pitiful descant repeating,  
 Descant forlorn, that fills wide spaces with sad lamenta-  
 tion.

### QUATRAINS.

#### THE PHENIX.

WHEN Adam ate of that forbidden food,  
 Sole bird that shared not in his sin was I :  
 And so my life is evermore renewed,  
 And I among the dying never die.

#### THE PELICAN.

I am the bird that from my bleeding breast  
 Draw the dear stream which nourishes my brood ;  
 And feebly unto men his love attest,  
 True pelican, that feeds them with his blood.

## THE HALCYON.

For twice seven days, in winter's middle rage,  
The winds are hushed, the billows are at rest ;  
Heaven all for me their fury doth assuage,  
While I am brooding o'er my fluctuant nest.

## THE COCK.

What time an ass with horrid bray you hear,  
Believe he sees a wicked sprite at hand ;  
But when I make my carol loud and clear,  
Know that an angel doth before me stand.

## THE SAME.

I, clapping on my sides my wings with might,  
First to myself the busy morn proclaim :  
Who others will to tasks and toil incite,  
Should first himself have summoned to the same.

## THE PEACOCK.

I, glorying in my tail's extended pride,  
See my foul legs, and then I shriek outright ;  
So shrieks a human soul, which has descried  
Its baseness 'mid vainglorious self-delight.

## THE EAGLE.

I no degenerate progeny will raise,  
But try my callow offspring, which will look  
In the sun's eye with peremptory gaze ;  
Nor feebler nurslings in my nest will brook.

## THE ERMINE.

To miry places me the hunters drive,  
Where I my robe of purest white must stain ;  
Then yield I, nor for life will longer strive ;  
For spotless death, not spotted life, is gain.

## THE MANDRAKE.

I from the earth with bleeding roots am wrung,  
With shriekings heard far off and keen lament :  
So thou and all who to the world have clung  
Shall from the world with piercing cries be rent.

## THE BEES.

We light on fruits and flowers and purest things ;  
For if on carcasses or aught unclean,  
When homeward we returned, with mortal stings  
Would slay us the keen watchers round our queen.

## THE DIAMOND.

I only polished am in mine own dust ;  
Nought else against my hardness will prevail :  
And thou, O man, in thine own sufferings must  
Be polished : every meaner art will fail.

## THE NIGHTINGALE.

Leaning my bosom on a pointed thorn,  
I bleed, and bleeding sing my sweetest strain ;  
For sweetest songs of saddest hearts are born,  
And who may here dis sever love and pain ?

## THE SNAKE.

Myself I force some narrowest passage through,  
Leaving my old and wrinkled skin behind,  
And issuing forth in splendour of my new :  
Hard entrance into life all creatures find.

## THE TIGER.

Hearing sweet music, as in fell despite,  
Enraged, myself I do in pieces tear :  
The melody of other men's delight  
There are of you who can as little bear.



## FALLING STARS.

Angels are we, who once from heaven exiled,  
Would scale its crystal battlements again ;  
But have their keen-eyed watchers not beguiled,  
Thrust by their glittering lances back amain.

## THE YOUNG CHILDREN.

Fair sight are we, white doves, which refuge sure  
Are finding in a tall rock's rifted side ;  
Types of a fairer thing, of children pure,  
Which early did their lives with Jesu hide.

## MORNING.

Day conquers : night, that was day's foe, is dead,  
And right across the morning's threshold lies :  
Day's golden sword its crimson blood hath shed,  
Which overfloweth all the eastern skies.

## THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.

As those four streams that had in Eden birth,  
And did the whole world water, four ways going,  
With spiritual freshness fill our thirsty earth  
Four fountains from one sacred mountain flowing.

## ST. STEPHEN (Στέφανος).

Of all which thou shouldst be thy glorious name  
Was prophecy and omen long before,  
Who, being Stephen, from the first didst claim  
The crown at length thy conquering temples wore.

---

OH thou of dark forebodings drear,  
Oh thou of such a faithless heart,  
Hast thou forgotten what thou art,  
That thou hast ventured so to fear ?

No weed on ocean's bosom cast,  
Borne by its never-resting foam  
This way and that, without a home,  
Till flung on some bleak shore at last :

But thou the lotus, which above  
Swayed here and there by wind and tide,  
Yet still below doth fixed abide,  
Fast rooted in the eternal Love.

### *THE OIL OF MERCY.*

MANY beauteous spots the earth  
Still may keep ; but brighter, fairer,  
Did that long-lost Eden show  
Than the loveliest that remaineth :  
So what marvel, when our Sire  
Was from thence expelled, he waited  
Lingering with a fond regret  
Round those holy happy places  
Once his own, while innocence  
Was his bright sufficient raiment ?

Long he lingered there, and saw  
Up from dark abysmal spaces  
Four strong rivers rushing ever :  
Saw the mighty wall exalted  
High as heaven, and on its heights  
Glimpses of the fiery Angel.  
Long he lingered near, with hope  
Which had never quite abated,  
That one day the righteous sentence,  
Dooming him to stern disgraces,  
Should be disannulled, and he  
In his first bliss reinstated.

But when mortal pangs surprised him,  
By an unseen foe assail'd,  
Seth he called, his dearest son,  
Called him to his side, and faintly  
Him addressed—' My son, thou knowest  
Of what sufferings partaker,  
Of what weariness and toil,  
Of what sickness, pain and danger  
I have been, since that stern hour  
Which from Eden's precincts drove me.  
But thou dost not know that God,  
When to exile forth I far'd,  
Homeless wanderer through the world,  
Thus with gracious speech bespake me :  
—" Though thou mayst not here continue,  
In these bless'd happy places,  
As before from pain exempt,  
Suffering, toil, and mortal ailment,  
Think not thou shalt therefore be  
Of my loving care forsaken :  
Rather shall that Tree of Life,  
In the middle garden planted,  
Once a precious balm distil,

Which to thee applied, thine ailments  
Shall be all removed, and thou  
Made of endless life partaker."—  
With these words he cheered me then,  
Words that have remained engraven  
On my bosom's tablets since.  
Go then, dear my son, oh hasten  
Unto Eden's guarded gate,  
Tell thine errand to the Angel ;  
And that fiery sentinel  
To the Tree will guide thee safely,  
Where it stands, aloft, alone,  
In the garden's middle spaces :  
Thence bring back that oil of mercy,  
Ere my lamp of life be wasted.'

When his father's feeble words  
Seth had heard, at once he hastened,  
Hoping to bring back that oil,  
Ere the light had wholly faded  
From his father's eyes, the lamp  
Of his life had wholly wasted.  
O'er the plain besprent with flowers,  
With ten thousand colours painted  
In that spring time of the year,  
By Thelassar on he hastened,  
Made no pause, till Eden's wall  
Rose an ever-verdant barrier,  
High as heaven's great roof, that shines  
As with bright carbuncles paven.  
There the son of Adam paused,  
For above him hung the Angel  
In the middle air suspense,  
With his swift sword glancing naked.  
Down upon his face he fell,  
By that sun-bright vision dazed.

‘ Child of man ’—these words he heard,  
‘ Rise, and say what thing thou cravest.’  
All his father’s need he told,  
And how now his father waited,  
In his mighty agony  
For that medicine yearning greatly.  
‘ But thou seekest ’—(this reply  
Then he heard) ‘ thou seekest vainly  
For that oil of mercy yet,  
Nor will tears nor prayers avail thee.  
Go then quickly back, and bring  
These my words to him, thy parent,  
Parent of the race of men.  
He and they in faith and patience  
Must abide, long years must roll  
Ere the precious fruit be gathered,  
Ere the Oil of Mercy flow  
From the blessèd Tree and sacred,  
In the Paradise of God :  
Nor till then will be obtainèd  
The strong medicine of life,  
Healing every mortal ailment ;  
Nor thy sire till then be made  
Of immortal life a sharer.  
Fear not that his heart will sink  
When these tidings back thou bearest,  
Rather thou shalt straightway see  
All his fears and pangs abated,  
And by faith allayed to meekness  
Every wish and thought impatient ;  
Hasten back then—thy return,  
Strongly yearning, he awaiteth :  
Hasten back then.’

On the word  
To his father back he hastened,  
Found him waiting his return

In his agony, his latest :  
 Told him of what grace to come,  
 Of what sure hope he was bearer :  
 And beheld him on that word,  
 Every fear and pang assuag'd,  
 And by faith allayed to meekness  
 Every wish and thought impatient,  
 Like a child resign himself  
 Unto sweet sleep, calm and painless.

### THE TREE OF LIFE.

FROM AN OLD LATIN POEM.

THERE is a spot, of men believed to be  
 Earth's centre, and the place of Adam's grave,  
 And here a slip that from a barren tree  
 Was cut, fruit sweet and salutary gave—  
 Yet not unto the tillers of the land ;  
 That bless'd fruit was culled by other hand.

The shape and fashion of the tree attend ;  
 From undivided stem at first it sprung ;  
 Thence in two arms its branches did outsend,  
 Like sail-yards whence the flowing sheet is hung,  
 Or as a yoke that in the furrow stands,  
 When the tired steers are loosened from their bands.

Three days the slip from which this tree should spring  
 Appeared as dead—then suddenly it bore,  
 (While earth and heaven stood awed and wondering)  
 Harvest of vital fruit ;—the fortieth more  
 Beheld it touch heaven's summit with its height,  
 And shroud its sacred head in clouds of light.

Yet the same while it did put forth below  
Branches twice six, these too with fruit endued,  
Which stretching to all quarters might bestow  
Upon all nations medicine and food,  
Which mortal men might eat, and eating be  
Sharers henceforth in immortality.

So fared it ; but when fifty days were gone,  
A breath divine, a mighty storm of heaven  
On all the branches swiftly lighted down,  
To which a rich nectareous taste was given,  
And all the heavy leaves that on them grew  
Distilled henceforth a sweet and heavenly dew.

Beneath that tree's great shadow on the plain  
A fountain bubbled up, whose lymph serene  
Nothing of earthly mixture might distain :  
Fountain so pure not anywhere was seen  
In all the world, nor on whose marge the earth  
Put flowers of such unfading beauty forth.

And thither did all people, young and old,  
Matrons and virgins, rich and poor, a crowd  
Stream ever, who, whenas they did behold  
Those branches with their golden burden bowed,  
Stretched forth their hands, and eager glances threw  
Toward the fruit distilling that sweet dew.

Yet touch they might not these, much less allay  
Their hunger, howsoe'er they might desire,  
Till the foul tokens of their former way  
They had washed off, the dust and sordid mire,  
And cleansed their bodies in that holy wave,  
Able from every spot and stain to save.

But when within their mouths they had received  
Of that immortal fruit the gust divine,  
Straight of all sickness were their souls relieved,  
The weak grew strong ;—and tasks they *did* decline  
As overgreat for them, they shunned no more,  
And things they deemed they could not bear, they bore.

But woe, alas ! some daring to draw near  
That sacred stream, did presently retire,  
Drew wholly back again, and did not fear  
To stain themselves in all their former mire,  
That fruit rejecting from their mouths again,  
Not any more their medicine, but their bane.

O happy they, who not withdrawing so,  
First in that fountain make them pure and fair,  
And who from thence unto the branches go,  
With power upon the fruitage hanging there :  
Thence by the branches of the lofty tree  
Ascend to heaven—The Tree of Life oh, see !

### THE TREE OF LIFE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF RÜCKERT.

WHEN Adam's latest breath was nearly gone,  
To Paradise the Patriarch sent his son ;

A branch to fetch him from the Tree of Life,  
Hoping to taste of it ere life was done.

Seth brought the branch, but ere he had arrived,  
His father's spirit was already flown.



Then planted they the twig on Adam's grave,  
And it was tended still from son to son.

It grew while Joseph in the dungeon lay,  
It grew while Israel did in Egypt groan.

Sweet odours gave the blossoms of the tree,  
When David harping sat upon his throne.

Dry was the tree, when from the ways of God  
Went erring in his wisdom Solomon :

Yet the world hoped it would revive anew,  
When David's stock should give another Son.

Faith saw in spirit this, the while she sat  
Mourning beside the floods of Babylon.

And when the eternal lightning flashed from heaven,  
The tree asunder burst with jubilant tone.

To the dry trunk this grace from God was given,  
The wood of Passion should from thence be won.

The blind world fashioned out of it the Cross,  
And its Salvation nailed with scorn thereon.

Then bore the Tree of Life ensanguined fruit,  
Which whoso tasteth, life shall be his loan.

Oh look, oh look, how grows the Tree of Life ;  
By storms established more, not overthrown.

May the *whole* world beneath its shadow rest !  
*Half* has its shelter there already won.

## *PARADISE.*

FROM THE GERMAN OF RÜCKERT.

O H ! Paradise must show more fair  
Than any earthly ground ;  
And therefore longs my spirit there  
Right quickly to be found.

In Paradise a stream must flow  
Of everlasting love :  
Each tear of longing shed below  
Therein a pearl will prove.

In Paradise a breath of balm  
All anguish must allay,  
Till every anguish growing calm,  
Even mine shall flee away.

And there the tree of stillest peace  
In verdant spaces grows :  
Beneath it can one never cease  
To dream of blest repose.

A cherub at the gate must be,  
Far off the world to fray,  
That its rude noises reach not me,  
To fright my dream away.

My heart, that weary ship, at last  
Safe haven there will gain,  
And on the breast will slumber fast  
The wakeful infant, Pain.

For every thorn that pierced me here  
The rose will there be found ;  
With joy, earth's roses brought not near,  
My head will there be crowned.

There all delights will blossom forth,  
That here in bud expire,  
And from all mourning weeds of earth  
Be wove a bright attire.

All here I sought with vain pursuit,  
Will freely meet me there,  
As from green branches golden fruit,  
Fair flowers from gardens fair.

My youth, that by me swept amain,  
On swift wing borne away,  
And Love, that suffered me to drain  
His nectar for a day,—

These, never wishing to depart,  
Will me for ever bless,  
Their darling fold unto the heart,  
And comfort and caress.

And there the Loveliness, whose glance  
From far did on me gleam,  
But whose unveil'd countenance  
Was only seen in dream,

Will, meeting all my soul's desires,  
Unveil itself to me,  
When to the choir of starry lyres  
Shall mine united be.

## *THE HOLY EUCHARIST.*

FROM THE SPANISH OF CALDERON.

HONEY in the lion's mouth,  
Emblem mystical, divine,  
How the sweet and strong combine ;  
Cloven rock for Israel's drouth ;  
Treasure-house of golden grain,  
By our Joseph laid 'in store,  
In his brethren's famine sore  
Freely to dispense again ;  
Dew on Gideon's snowy fleece ;  
Well from bitter changed to sweet ;  
Shew-bread laid in order meet,  
Bread whose cost doth not increase  
Though no rain in April fall ;  
Horeb's manna, freely given,  
Showered in white dew from heaven,  
Marvellous, angelical ;  
Weightiest bunch of Canaan's vine ;  
Cake to strengthen and sustain  
Through long days of desert pain ;  
Salem's monarch's bread and wine ;—  
Thou the antidote shalt be  
Of my sickness and my sin,  
Consolation, medicine,  
Life and Sacrament to me.

*THE PRODIGAL.*

WHY feedest thou on husks so coarse and rude?  
I could not be content with angels' food.

How camest thou companion to the swine?  
I loathed the courts of heaven, the choir divine.

Who bade thee crouch in hovel dark and drear?  
I left a palace wide to hide me here.

Harsh tyrant's slave who made thee, once so free?  
A father's rule too heavy seemed to me.

What sordid rags float round thee on the breeze?  
I laid immortal robes aside for these.

An exile through the world who bade thee roam?  
None, but I wearied of a happy home.

Why must thou dweller in a desert be?  
A garden seemed not fair enough to me.

Why sue a beggar at the mean world's door?  
To live on God's large bounty seemed so poor.

What has thy forehead so to earthward brought?  
To lift it higher than the stars I thought.

*LINES WRITTEN ON THE FIRST TIDINGS  
OF THE CABUL MASSACRES.*

JANUARY, 1842.

WE sat our peaceful hearths beside,  
Within our temples hushed and wide  
We worshipped without fear :  
With solemn rite, with festal blaze,  
We welcomed in the earliest days  
Of this new-coming year.

O ye that died, brave hearts and true,  
How in those days it fared with you  
We did not then surmise ;  
That bloody rout which still must seem  
The fancy of a horrid dream,  
Was hidden from our eyes :

But haunts us now by day and night  
The vision of that ghastly flight,  
Its shapes of haggard fear :  
While still from many a mourning home  
The wails of lamentation come,  
And fill our saddened ear.

O England, bleeding at thy heart  
For thy lost sons, a solemn part  
Doth Heaven to thee assign.  
High wisdom hast thou need to ask,  
For vengeance is a fearful task,  
And yet that task is thine.

Oh then fulfil it, not in pride,  
Nor aught to passionate hate allied ;  
    But know thyself to be  
The justicer of righteous Heaven ;  
That unto thee a work is given,  
    A burden laid on thee.

So thine own heart from guilty stains  
First cleanse, and then, for what remains,  
    That do with all thy might ;  
That with no faltering hand fulfil,  
With no misgiving heart or will,  
    As dubious of the right :

That do, not answering wrong for wrong,  
But witnessing that truth is strong,  
    And, outraged, bringeth woe.  
'Tis this by lessons sad and stern,  
To men who no way else would learn,  
    Which thou art set to show.

*MOOLTAN.*

**B**EAR them gently, bear them duly, up the broad and  
sloping breach  
Of this torn and shattered city, till their resting-place  
they reach.

In the costly cashmeres folded, on the stronghold's top-  
most crown,  
In the place of foremost honour, lay these noble relics  
down.

Here repose, for this is meetest, ye who here breathed out  
your life,  
Ah ! in no triumphant battle, but beneath the assassin's  
knife.

Hither bearing England's message, bringing England's  
just command,  
Under England's ægis came ye to the chieftain of the  
land :

In these streets beset and wounded, hardly borne with  
life away,  
Faint, and bleeding, and forsaken, in your helplessness ye  
lay.

But the wolves that once have tasted blood, will ravin  
still for more ;  
From the infuriate city rises high the wild and savage  
roar.

Near and nearer grows the tumult of the gathering  
murderous crew ;  
Tremble round those helpless couches an unarmed but  
faithful few :



‘Profitless is all resistance : let us then this white flag  
wave ;  
Ere it be too late, disdain not mercy at their hands to  
crave.’

But to no unworthy pleading would descend that noble  
twain :

‘Nay, for mercy sue not ; ask not what to ask from these  
were vain.

‘We are two, betrayed and lonely ; human help or hope  
is none ;  
Yet, O friends, be sure that England owns beside us  
many a son.

‘They may slay us ; in our places multitudes will here be  
found,  
Strong to hurl this guilty city with its murderers to the  
ground ;

‘Yea, who stone by stone would tear it from its deep  
foundations strong,  
Rather than to leave unpunished them that wrought this  
bloody wrong.’

Other words they changed between them, which none else  
could understand,  
Accents of our native English, brothers grasping hand in  
hand.

So they died, the gallant-hearted ! so from earth their  
spirits past,  
Uttering words of lofty comfort each to each unto the  
last ;

And we heed, but little heeded their true spirits far  
away,  
All of wrong and coward outrage, heaped on the unfeeling  
clay.

—Lo! a few short moons have vanished, and the promised ones appear,  
England's pledged and promised thousands, England's multitudes are here.

Flame around the blood-stained ramparts loud-voiced  
messengers of death,  
Girdling with a fiery girdle, blasting with a fiery breath ;

Ceasing not, till choked with corpses low is laid the  
murderers' hold,  
And in his last lair the tiger toils of righteous wrath  
enfold.

Well, oh well—ye have not failed them who on England's  
truth relied,  
Who on England's name and honour did in that dread  
hour confide :

Now one last dear duty render to the faithful and the  
brave,  
What of earth they left behind them rescuing for a  
worthier grave.

Oh then, bear them, hosts of England, up the broad and  
sloping breach  
Of this torn and shattered city, till their resting-place they  
reach.

In the costly cashmeres folded, on the rampart's topmost  
crown,  
In the place of foremost honour lay these noble relics  
down.

## THE LOREY-LEY.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.

WHAT makes me so heavy-hearted,  
I ask of my heart in vain :  
But a tale of the times departed  
Haunts ever my heart and brain.

In the cool air it waxes dimmer,  
And quietly flows the Rhine :  
And the mountain summits glimmer  
In the sunny evening shine.

There sits on the rocks a maiden,  
In marvellous beauty there ;  
With gold her apparel is laden,  
And she combs her golden hair ;

And the comb is of gold and glistens,  
And thereto she sings a song,  
Which for every soul that listens  
Has a potent spell and strong.

The boatman in light boat speeding,  
When he hears it utters a cry,  
No longer the rapids heeding,  
But only gazing on high.

The stream is its wild waves flinging  
O'er boat and boatman anon,  
And 'tis this with her fairy singing  
That the Lorey-ley has done.

## HYMN TO OCEAN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF RÜCKERT.

O CRADLE, whence the suns ascend, old Ocean  
divine ;

O grave, whereto the suns descend, old Ocean divine :

O spreading in the calm of night thy mirror, wherein  
The moon her countenance doth bend, old Ocean divine.

O thou that dost in midnights still thy chorus of waves  
With dances of the planets blend, old Ocean divine :

The morning and the evening blooms are roses of thine,  
Two roses that for thine are kened, old Ocean divine.

O Amphitrite's panting breast, whose breathing doth  
make

The waves to fall and to ascend, old Ocean divine :

O womb of Aphrodite, bear thy beautiful child,  
Abroad thy glory to commend, old Ocean divine.

Oh sprinkle thou with pearly dew earth's garland of  
spring,

For only thou hast pearls to spend, old Ocean divine.

All Naiads that from thee had sprung, commanded by  
thee,

Back to thy Nereid-dances tend, old Ocean divine.

What ships of thought sail forth on thee ! Atlantis doth  
sleep

In silence at thine utmost end, old Ocean divine.

The goblets of the gods, from high Olympus that fall,  
Thou dost on coral boughs suspend, old Ocean divine.

A diver in the sea of love my song is, that fain  
Thy glory would to all commend, old Ocean divine.

I like the moon beneath thy waves with yearning would  
plunge ;

Thence might I like the sun ascend, old Ocean divine.

### SUNSET.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

FAUST is watching the setting sun, and after some mournful reflections  
exclaims :

YET the rich blessing which this hour bestows  
Let us not mar with mournful thoughts like these :  
See yonder where the sun of evening glows,  
How gleam the green-girt cottages.  
He stoops, he sinks—and overlived is day :  
But he hastes on, to kindle life anew.  
Ah ! that no wing lifts me from earth away  
Him to pursue, and evermore pursue :  
Then should I in eternal evening-light  
The hushed world at my feet behold,  
See every vale in calm, and flaming every height,  
And silver brooks see lost in floods of gold.

Then would not the wild mountain hinder more  
 My course divine with all its rugged heads :  
 Its heated bays even now the ocean spreads  
 My wondering eyes before.  
 Yet the god seems at last away to sink ;  
 But the new impulse stirs with might :  
 I hasten his eternal beams to drink,  
 The day before me, and behind the night,  
 The heaven above me spread, and under me the sea :  
 Fair dream ! which while I dwell on, he is gone.  
 Ah ! that an actual wing may not so soon  
 Unto our spirit's wing united be,  
 And yet it is to each inbred.  
 That still his spirit forward, upward springs,  
 When hidden in blue spaces overhead  
 The lark his shattering carol sings ;  
 When over pine-clad mountains soars  
 The eagle, spread upon the air,  
 When over seas and over moors  
 The crane doth to its home repair.

### CONFIDENCES.

S TERNLY tolls the castle bell,  
 A departing sinner's knell.

' Husband, truth must now be spoken,  
 I to thee my faith have broken.'

' Truth with truth repaid must be—  
 Wife, and I have poisoned thee.'

ON A BROTHER AND SISTER WHO DIED AT THE SAME TIME,  
ABERGELE, AUGUST 20, 1868.

MEN said, who saw the tender love they bare  
Each to the other, and their hearts so bound  
And knit in one, that neither sought or found  
A nearer tie than that affection rare—  
How with the sad survivor will it fare,  
When death shall for a season have undone  
The links of that close love ; and taking one,  
The other leaves to draw unwelcome air ?  
And some perchance who loved them, would revolve  
Sadly the sadness which on one must fall,  
The lonely left by that dividing day.  
Vain fears ! for He who loved them best of all,  
Mightier than we life's mysteries to solve,  
In one fire-chariot bore them both away.

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ON THE REVIEW OF THE VOLUNTEERS IN HYDE-PARK  
BY THE QUEEN, 1860.

NO pause, no stay—a glorious hour or more,  
And that loud-clashing music is not dumb,  
For still the close battalions come and come,  
As though all England the long pent-up store  
Of her deliberate valour would outpour,  
Not flaunting in war's liveries rich and gay,  
But all in sober green and working gray,  
O Lady of the land, thy feet before.  
High beats thine heart, the Lady of a land  
That breeds such men ; and theirs beat proud and high,  
Who only with step statelier and more grand  
Would move beneath thy recompensing eye,  
Girt, if that day should call them, to reply  
On some dread field to duty's last demand.

SWEET, and yet sad, those thousand voices rung,  
Winding and travelling through the long defiles  
Of courts and galleries and far-reaching aisles ;  
And bright the banners from proud arches sprung ;  
But not the less their drooping folds among  
Lurked a dim hoard of grief ; while over all,  
Chastening, not marring, our high festival,  
The shadow of an absent Greatness hung ;  
Absent, and yet in absence present more,  
For all we owe to him, and might have owed,  
For the rich gifts which, missing, we deplore,  
Than if he were rejoicing at this hour,  
We with him, that the seed his wisdom sowed  
Had blossomed in this bright consummate flower.

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FROM THE GERMAN OF RÜCKERT.

MAN, the pomp and pride of earth  
Were not merely spread for thee ;  
Nature bade some part have birth  
For her own delight and glee.

Therefore sings the nightingale,  
While thou sleepest, in the night ;  
Flowers, the fairest ones, unveil  
Half their beauty ere daylight.

Soars the loveliest butterfly  
All untracked by eye of thine ;  
Pearls in ocean's bosom lie,  
Jewels in the unwrought mine.

Richly, child, are sky and plain  
Furnished for thee ; be content  
That thy mother too retain  
For herself some ornament.



*THE CURSE OF CORN-HOARDERS.*

O H, time it was of famine sore,  
That ever sorer grew ;  
And many hungered, who before  
Rich plenty only knew.

For year by year the labouring hind  
Bewailed his fruitless toil,  
And ever seemed some spell to bind  
The hard, unthankful soil.

His seed-corn rotted in the ground,  
And did not more appear  
Or if in blade and stalk was found,  
It withered in the ear.

And now unseasonable rains,  
And now untimely drought,  
Or blight and mildew, all his pains  
And hopes to nothing brought.

And ever did that keen distress  
In wider circles spread ;  
Who once with alms did others bless  
Now lacked their daily bread.

One only, who was never known  
To bless another's board—  
In all that Suabian land alone  
This cruel, impious lord,

Did all the while exempt appear  
From this wide-reaching ill ;  
With largest bounties of the year  
His broad fields laughing still.

The autumn duly had outpoured  
For him its plenteous horn,  
And safe in ample granaries stored  
He saw his golden corn ;

And high he reared new granaries vast,  
Of hewn stone builded strong,  
And made with bars of iron fast,  
And fenced from every wrong.

Till safe, as seemed, from every foe,  
He now, as if the sight  
Of others' want and others' woe  
Enhanced his own delight,

Sate high, and with his minions still  
Did keep continual feast ;  
Long nights with waste and wassail fill,  
Which not with morning ceased ;

Till oft-times they who wandered near  
Those halls at early day,  
Culling wild herbs and roots in fear,  
Their hunger to allay,

Heard sounds of fierce and reckless mirth  
Borne from those halls of pride,  
While famine's feeble wail went forth  
From all the land beside ;

And strange thoughts rose in many a breast,  
    Why God's true servants pined,  
And largest means this man unblest  
    Did still for riot find ;

Which stranger grew, as more and more  
    He did his coffers fill  
With gold and every precious store,  
    Wrung from men's cruel ill ;

As he each poor man's field was fain  
    To add unto his own—  
To the wide space of his domain,  
    Now daily wider grown.

For some, their lives awhile to save,  
    Had sold him house and lands ;  
And some to bonds their children gave,  
    As grew his stern demands :

Yet not a whit for poor man's curse  
    This evil churl did care ;  
He said,—it passed, nor left him worse—  
    That words were only air.

He, if they cried ' For Jesu's sake,  
    That so may light on thee  
God's blessing,' answer proud would make,  
    ' What will that profit me ?

' I ask no blessing, yet my fields  
    Have store of precious grain :  
The earth to me its fatness yields,  
    The sky its sun and rain.

‘And high my granaries stand, and strong,  
Huge-vaulted, ribbed with stone :  
What need I fear? from any wrong  
I can defend mine own.’—

Thus ever fierce and fiercer rose  
His words of scorn and pride ;  
And more he mocked at mortal woes,  
And earth and heaven defied.

And thus it chanced upon a day,  
As oft had been before,  
That from his gates he spurned away  
A widow, old and poor ;

When to his presence entered in  
A servant, pale with fear,  
And did with trembling words begin :—  
‘O dread my lord, give ear !

‘As me perchance my business drew  
Thy storehouse vast beside,  
I heard unwonted sounds, and through  
The iron grating spied.

‘The thing I saw, if like it seemed  
To any thing on earth,  
I might some huge black bull have deemed  
That hellish monstrous birth.

‘Yet how should beast have entrance found  
Into that guarded place,  
Which strangely now it wandered round,  
With wild unresting pace ?

Oh, here must be some warning meant,  
Which do not now deride :  
Oh, yet have pity, and relent,  
Nor speak such words of pride.'

Slight heed his tale of fear might find,  
Slight heed his counsel true ;  
That utterance of his faithful mind  
He now had learned to rue,

But that, even then, another came,  
Worse terror in his mien :  
—'Three monstrous creatures, breathing flame,  
These eyes but now have seen ;

'They toss about thy hoarded store,  
And greedily they eat,  
Consuming thus a part, but more  
They stamp beneath their feet.

'Oh, Sir, full often God doth take  
What we refuse to give ;  
But yet to Him large offering make,  
And all our souls may live.'

—'Fool !—let another hasten now,  
But if he shall not see  
The self-same vision, fellow, thou  
Shalt hang on yonder tree.'

He said—when, lo ! in rushed a third  
Within the briefest space :—  
—'Of horses wild and bulls a herd  
Is filling all the place.

‘ The numbers of that furious rout  
 Wax ever high and higher ;  
 And from their mouths smoke issues out,  
 And from their nostrils fire.

‘ From side to side they leap and bound,  
 The hoarded corn they eat,  
 They toss and scatter on the ground,  
 And stamp beneath their feet.

•

‘ My lord, these portents do not scorn ;  
 Thy granary doors throw wide,  
 And poor men’s prayers even yet may turn  
 The threatened wrath aside.’

—‘ What, all conspiring in one tale !  
 Or fooled by one deceit !  
 Yet think not ye shall so prevail,  
 Or me so lightly cheat.

‘ Come with me ;—fling the portals back ;  
 I too this sight would see :  
 What ! one and all this courage lack ?  
 Give *me* the ponderous key.’

In fear the vassal multitude  
 Fell back on either side :  
 Before the doors he singly stood,  
 He singly—in his pride.

But them, or ere he touched, asunder  
 Some hand unbidden threw ;  
 With lightning flash, with sound like thunder  
 The gates wide open flew.

How shook then underneath the tread  
Of thousand hoofs the earth !  
Day darkened into night with dread,  
So weird a troop rushed forth !

And all who saw like dead men stood,  
As swept that wild troop by,  
Till lost within a neighbouring wood  
For aye from mortal eye.

But when that hurricane was past  
Of hideous sight and sound,  
And when they breathed anew, they cast  
Their fearful glances round :

They lifted up a blackened corse,  
Where scorched and crushed it lay,  
And scarred with hoofs of fiery force,—  
Then bore in awe away ;

They bore away, but not to hide  
In any holy ground ;  
Who in his height of sin had died  
No hallowed burial found.

## THE CORREGAN.

A BALLAD OF BRITTANY.

THEY were affianced, a youthful pair ;  
In youth, alas ! they divided were.

Lovely twins she has brought to light.  
A boy and a girl, both snowy white.

—‘What shall now for thee be done,  
Who hast brought me this longed-for son ?

Shall I fetch thee fowl from the sedgy mere ?  
Or strike in the greenwood the flying deer ?’

—‘Wild deer’s flesh would please me best,  
Yet wherefore go to the far forèst ?’

He snatched his spear, he mounted his steed ;  
He to the greenwood is gone with speed.

When there he came, a milk-white hind  
Started before him as swift as wind.

He pursued it with foot so fleet,  
On his forehead stood the heat,

And down his courser’s flanks it ran ;  
—Evening now to close began ;

When he espied a stream that flowed  
Near the Corregan’s abode.

Smoothest turf encircled its brink ;  
Down from his steed he alit to drink.



By its margin was seated there  
The Corregan, combing her golden hair,

Combing it with a comb of gold ;  
Richly clad, and bright to behold.

—‘Thou art bolder than thou dost know,  
Daring to trouble my waters so.

‘Me shalt thou on the instant wed  
Or in three days shalt be dead.’

—‘I will not wed on the instant thee,  
Nor yet in three days dead will be.

‘When God pleases I shall die,  
And already wedded am I ;

‘And besides I had rather died  
Than to make a fairy my bride.’

—‘Sick am I, mother, at heart ; oh, spread,  
If thou lovest me, my death-bed.

‘Me the fairy has looked to death :  
In three days shall I yield my breath.

‘Yet though my body in earth they lay,  
To her I love, oh, nothing say.’

—Three days after, ‘O mother, tell,’  
She exclaimed, ‘why tolls the bell ?’

‘Why do the priests so mournfully go,  
Clad in white, and chanting low ?’

—‘A beggar we lodged died yesternight ;  
They bury him with the morning light.’

—‘O mother, where is my husband gone?’

—‘He from the town will return anon.’

—‘O mother, I would to church repair ;  
Tell me what were meetest to wear :

‘Shall it be my robe of blue,  
Or my vest of scarlet hue?’

—‘It is now the manner to wear  
Garments of black, my daughter, there.’

When she came to the churchyard ground,  
Her husband’s grave was the first she found.

—‘Death of kin I have not heard,  
Yet this earth has been newly stirred.’

—‘My daughter, the truth I needs must show ;  
’Tis thy husband that lies below.’

Down she fell upon that floor ;  
Thence she rose not any more.

But the night next after the day,  
When by his body her body lay,

Two tall oaks, both stately and fair,  
Marvel to see ! arose in air ;

And upon their uppermost spray  
Two white doves, delightsome and gay :

At dawn of morn they sweetly sung ;  
And lightly toward heaven at noon they sprung.

*THE ETRURIAN KING.*

ONE only eye beheld him in his pride,  
The old Etrurian monarch,—as he died,

And as they laid him on his bier of stone,  
Shield, spear, and arrows laying at his side ;

In golden armour, with his crown of gold,  
One only eye the kingly warrior spied :

Nor that eye long—for in the common air  
The wondrous pageant might not long abide,

Which had in seal'd sepulchre the wrongs  
Of time for thirty centuries defied.

That eye beheld it melt and disappear,  
As down an hour-glass the last sand-drops glide.

A few short moments,—and a shrunken heap  
Of common dust survived, of all that pride :

And so that gorgeous vision will remain  
For evermore to other eye denied :

And he who saw must oftentimes believe  
That him his waking senses had belied ;

Since what if all the pageants of this earth  
Melt soon away, and may not long abide,

Yet when did ever doom so swift before  
Even to the glories of the world betide ?

*THE PRIZE OF SONG.*

CHALLENGED by the haughty daughters  
Of the old Emathian king,  
Strove the Muses at the waters  
Of that Heliconian spring—  
Proved beside those hallowed fountains  
Unto whom the prize of song,  
Unto whom those streams and mountains  
Should of truest right belong.

First those others in vexed numbers  
Mourned the rebel giant brood,  
Whom the earth's huge mass encumbers,  
Or who writhe, the vulture's food ;  
Mourned for earth-born power, which faileth  
Heaven to win by might and main ;  
Then, thrust back, for ever wailleth,  
Gnawing its own heart in pain.

Nature shuddered while she hearkened,  
Through her veins swift horror ran :  
Sun and stars, perturbed and darkened,  
To forsake their orbs began.  
Back the rivers fled ; the ocean  
Howled upon a thousand shores,  
As it would with wild commotion  
Burst its everlasting doors.

Hushed was not that stormy riot,  
Till were heard the sacred Nine,  
Singing of the blissful quiet  
In the happy seats divine ;

Singing of those thrones immortal,  
Whither struggling men attain,  
Passing humbly through the portal  
Of obedience, toil and pain.

At that melody symphonious  
Joy to Nature's heart was sent,  
And the spheres, again harmonious,  
Made sweet thunder as they went :  
Lightly moved, with pleasure dancing,  
Little hills and mountains high,  
Helicon his head advancing,  
Till it almost touched the sky.

—Thou whom once those Sisters holy  
On thy lonely path have met,  
And, thy front thou stooping lowly,  
There their sacred laurel set,  
Oh be thine, their mandate owning,  
Aye with them to win the prize,  
Reconciling and atoning  
With thy magic harmonies :

An Arion thou, whose singing  
Rouses not a furious sea,  
Rather the sea-monsters bringing  
Servants to its melody ;  
An Amphion, not with passion  
To set wild the builders' mind,  
But the mystic walls to fashion,  
And the stones in one to bind.

ON THE  
MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCE OF WALES,

March 10, 1863.

O merchantman who, seeking some fair pearl,  
Whose orient splendours should enrich thy life,  
And having found one fairest, has been wise  
To win, and make for ever thine and ours,  
Henceforth a cynosure of all our eyes,  
Set in thine own and England's coronet ;  
Oh fortunate !—yet not that round thee throng  
A people happy in thy happiness,  
Nor that boon nature empties in thy lap  
Her golden tributes of a golden time,  
Nor that the rod of empire may be thine,  
The sceptre of the islands of the sea ;  
Oh happy, not in aught that would divide,  
But most in that which links thee with thy kind—  
Most happy, that, Heaven favouring, thou hast found  
Of thy life's orb the absent hemisphere,  
The fulness, and mysterious complement ;  
Which they who miss, earth's wealthiest, wisest, greatest,  
Wander disconsolate, and reap no joy  
From life defeated and half unfulfilled,  
While they who find, though poorest, are most rich.  
Oh well is thee, that in two commonest names,  
Yet holiest, names first heard in Paradise,  
That in the names of husband and of wife  
The sum of thy pure happiness, and hers  
Who has fulfilled thy life, is all contained.

## POEMS FROM EASTERN SOURCES.

### *ALEXANDER AT THE GATES OF PARADISE.*

A LEGEND FROM THE TALMUD.

FIERCE was the glare of Cashmere's middle day,  
When Alexander for Hydaspes bent,  
Through trackless wilds urged his impetuous way ;

Yet in that wide and wasteful continent  
A little vale he found, so calm, so sweet,  
He there awhile to tarry was content.

A crystal stream was sparkling at his feet,  
Whereof the Monarch, when his meal was done,  
Drank a long draught, to slake his fever heat.

Again he drank, and yet again, as one  
Who would have drained that fountain crystalline  
Of all its waves, and left it dry anon :

For in his veins, ofttimes a-fire with wine,  
And in his bosom, throne of sleepless pride,  
The while he drank, went circling peace divine.

It seemed as though all evil passions died  
Within him, slaked was every fire accurst ;  
So that in rapturous joy aloud he cried :

‘ Oh ! might I find where these pure waters first  
Shoot sparkling from their living fountain-head,  
Oh, there to quench my spirit’s inmost thirst !

‘ Sure, if we followed where these waters led,  
We should at length some fairer region gain  
Than yet has quaked beneath our iron tread,—

‘ Some land that should in very truth contain  
All that we dream of beautiful and bright,  
And idly dreaming of, pursue in vain ;

‘ That land must stoop beneath our conquering might.  
Companions dear, this toil remains alone,  
To win that region of unmatched delight.

‘ O faithful in a thousand labours known,  
One toil remains, the noblest and the last ;  
Let us arise, and make that land our own.’

—Through realms of darkness, wildernesses vast,  
All populous with sights and sounds of fear,  
In heat and cold, by day and night, he past,

With trumpet clang, with banner and with spear ;  
Yearning to drink that river, where it sent  
Its first pure waters forth, serene and clear ;

Till boldest captains sank, their courage spent,  
And dying cried—‘ This stream all search defies —  
But never would he tarry nor relent,

Nor pitched his banners, till before his eyes  
Rose high as heaven, in its secluded state,  
The mighty verdant wall of Paradise.



And lo ! that stream, which early still and late  
He had tracked upward, issued bright and clear  
From underneath the angel-guarded gate.

—‘And who art thou that hast adventured here,  
Daring to startle this serene abode  
With flash of mortal weapons, sword and spear?’

So the angelic sentinel of God,  
Fire-flashing, to the bold invader cried,  
Whose feet profane those holy precincts trod.

The son of Philip without dread replied,—  
‘Is Alexander’s fame unknown to thee,  
Which the world knows—mine, who have victory tied

‘To my sword’s hilt ; and who, while stoop to me  
All other lands, would win what rich or fair  
This land contains, and hold it mine in fee?’

—‘Thou dost thyself proclaim that part or share  
Thou hast not here. O man of blood and sin,  
Go back—with those blood-stain’d hands despair

This place of love and holy peace to win :  
This is the gate of righteousness, and they,  
The righteous, only here may enter in.’

Around, before him, lightnings dart and play :  
He undismayed—‘Of travail long and hard  
At least some token let me bear away.’

—‘Lo ! then this skull—which if thou wilt regard  
And to my question seek the fit reply,  
All thy long travail shall have full reward.

‘ Once in yon hollow circle lodged an eye,  
That was, like thine, for ever coveting,  
Which worlds on worlds had failed to satisfy.

‘ Now, while thou gazest on that ghastly ring,  
From whence of old a greedy eye outspied,  
Say what thing was it,—for there was a thing,—

‘ Which filled at last and thoroughly satisfied  
The eye that in that hollow cavern dwelt,  
So that, “Enough, I have enough,” it cried.’

—Blank disappointment at the gift he felt,  
And hardly taking, turned in scorn away ;  
Nor he the riddle of the angel spelt,

But cried unto his captains,—‘ We delay,  
And at these portals lose our time in vain,  
By more than mortal terrors kept at bay :

‘ Come—other lands as goodly spoils contain,  
Come—all too long untouched the Indian gold,  
The pearls and spice of Araby remain.

Come, and who will this riddle may unfold.’  
Then stood before him, careless of his ire,  
An Indian sage, who rendered answer bold—

‘ Lord of the world, commanded to inquire  
What was it that could satisfy an eye,  
That organ of man’s measureless desire—

‘ By deed and word *thou* plainly dost reply,  
That its desire can nothing tame or quell,  
That it can never know sufficiency.

‘ While thou enlargest thy desire as hell,  
Filling thine hand, but filling not thy lust,  
Thou dost proclaim man’s eye insatiable :

‘ Such answer from thy lips were only just.  
Yet ’twas not so. One came at last, who threw  
Into yon face a handful of vile dust,

‘ Whereof a few small grains did fall into  
And filled the vault and hollow of that eye,  
When that which suffisance not ever knew  
Before, was fain, “ I have enough,” to cry.’

*FROM THE PERSIAN.*

DEATH ends well Life’s undelight,  
Yet Life shudders at Death’s sight.

Life the dark hand sees, but not  
What it brings, the clear cup bright.

So at sight of Love a heart  
Fears that it must perish quite.

Only Self, the tyrant dark,  
He must perish in Love’s might—

That the heart may truly live,  
Breathing free in Love’s pure light.

## CHIDHER'S WELL.

FROM THE PERSIAN.

THEE have thousands sought in vain  
Over land and barren main,

Chidher's Well,—of which men say,  
That thou makest young again ;

Fountain of eternal youth,  
Washing free from every stain.

To thy waves the agèd moons  
Aye betake them, when they wane ;

And the suns their golden light,  
While they bathe in thee, retain.

From this fountain drops are flung,  
Mingling with the vernal rain,

And the old earth decks itself  
With its young attire again.

Thitherward the freckled trout  
Up the water-courses strain ;

And the timid wild gazelles  
Seek it through the desert plain.

Great Iskander,\* mighty lord,  
Sought that fountain, but in vain ,

\* Alexander.

Through the land of darkness went  
In its quest with fruitless pain,

When by wealth of conquered worlds  
Did his thirst unslaked remain.

Many more with parched lip  
Must lie down and dizzy brain,

And of this, a fountain sealed  
Unto them, in death complain.

If its springs to thee are known,  
Weary wanderer, tell me plain.

From beneath the throne of God  
It must well, a lucid vein.

To its sources lead me, Lord,  
That I do not thirst again ;

And my lips not any more  
Shall the earth's dark waters stain.

## *LIFE AND DEATH.*

### A PARABLE.

FROM THE PERSIAN.

THERE went a man through Syrian land,  
Leading a Camel by the hand ;  
The beast, made wild by some alarm,  
Began to threaten sudden harm,  
So fiercely snorting, that the man  
With all his speed escaping ran—  
He ran, and saw a well that lay,  
As chance would have it, by the way :  
He heard the Camel snort so near,  
As almost maddened him with fear,  
And crawled into the well, and there  
Fell not, but dangled in mid air ;  
For from a fissure in the stone,  
Which lined its sides, a bush had grown ;  
To this he clung with all his might,  
From thence lamenting his sad plight :  
He saw, what time he looked on high,  
The beast's head perilously nigh,  
Ready to drag him back again ;  
He looked into the bottom then,  
And there a Dragon he espied,  
Whose horrid jaws were yawning wide,  
Agape to swallow him alive,  
So soon as he should there arrive.  
But as he hung two fears between,  
A third by that poor wretch was seen ;  
For where the bush by which he clung  
Had from the broken wall outsprung,

He saw two Mice precisely there,  
One black, one white, a stealthy pair—  
He saw the black one and the white,  
How at the root by turns they bite,  
They gnaw, they pull, they dig, and still  
The earth that held its fibres spill,  
Which as it rustling downward ran,  
The Dragon to look up began,  
Watching how soon the shrub and all  
Its burden would together fall.

The man in anguish, fear, despair,  
Beleaguered, threatened everywhere,  
In state of miserable doubt,  
In vain for safety gazed about.  
But as he looked around him so,  
A twig he spied, and on it grow  
Ripe berries from their laden stalk ;  
Then his desire he could not balk ;  
When these did once his eye engage,  
He saw no more the Camel's rage,  
Nor Dragon in the underground,  
Nor game the busy Mice had found.  
The beast above might snort and blow,  
The Dragon watch his prey below,  
The Mice gnaw near him as they pleased—  
The berries eagerly he seized ;  
They seemed to him right good to eat ;  
A dainty mouthful, welcome treat,  
They brought him such a keen delight,  
His danger was forgotten quite.

But who, you ask, is this vain man,  
Who thus forget his terror can ?

Then learn, O friend, that man art thou !  
Listen, and I will tell thee how.  
The Dragon in the well beneath,  
That is the yawning gulf of death ;  
The Camel threatening overhead,  
Is life's perplexity and dread.  
Tis thou who, life and death between,  
Hangest on this world's sapling green ;  
And they who gnaw the root, the twain  
Who thee with thy support would fain  
Deliver unto death a prey,—  
These names the Mice have, Night and Day.  
From morn to evening gnaws the white,  
And would the root unfasten quite :  
From evening till the morn comes back  
In deepest stillness gnaws the black ;  
And yet, in midst of these alarms,  
The berry, Pleasure, has such charms,  
That thou the Camel of life's woe,  
That thou the Dragon death below,  
That thou the two Mice, night and day,  
And all forgettest, save the way  
To get most berries in thy power,  
And on the grave's steep side devour.



## LOVE.

LOVE is it, Love divine, that hath an impulse lent  
To man, and beast, and worm, and every element.

All riddles Love can solve, all mysteries unfold ;  
Ask what thou wilt, and Love the answer will present.

I asked the circling heavens why they so swiftly moved :  
Round Love's eternal throne they ever wheeling went.

I asked the waves what made their murmurs never cease :  
Shall we in Love's great hymn with silence be content ?

I asked the bickering fire when it would climb no more :  
When with the fire above in Love's communion blent.

Night asked I why she hung the world with darkness  
round :  
To consecrate the world for Love a bridal tent.

I asked the westwind why it breathed so soft and warm :  
All roses to unfold for Love the westwind meant.

I sought some issue from the labyrinth of Love ;  
And found my bliss was there to be for ever pent.

O soul, that until now has sullenly refused  
Thy portion in Love's joy, O sullen heart, relent ;

Oh ! see Love's mighty dance, oh ! hear Love's choral  
hymn ;  
Stand up—in dance and hymn to take thy part consent.

*THE FALCON.*

FROM THE PERSIAN.

HIGH didst thou once in honour stand,  
The falcon on a Monarch's hand :

Thine eye, unhooded and unseeled,  
All depths of being pierced and scanned :

All worlds of space from end to end  
Thy never-wearied pinion spanned.

O falcon of the higher heaven,  
Entangled in an earthly band,

While all too eagerly thy prey  
Pursuing in a lower land,

In hope abide ;—thy Monarch yet  
For thy release shall give command,

And bid thee to resume again  
Thy place upon thy Monarch's hand.

*THE BREAKER OF IDOLS.*

**L**O! a hundred proud pagodas have the Moslem torches  
burned,  
Lo! a thousand monstrous idols Mahmoud's zeal has  
overturned.

He from northern Ghuznee issuing, through the world  
this word doth bear,—  
'God is ONE; ye shall no other with the peerless One  
compare:'

Till in India's furthest corner he has reached the costliest  
shrine  
Of the Brahmins, idol-tending—which they held the most  
divine.

Profits not the wild resistance; stands the victor at the  
gate,  
With this hugest idol's ruin all his work to consummate.

Forth in long procession streaming came the suppliant  
priests to meet—  
Came with ransom and with homage the resistless one to  
greet.

Ransom vast of gold they offer, pearls of price and jewels  
rare,  
Purchase of their idol's safety, this their dearest will he  
spare.

And there wanted not who counselled, that he should his  
hand withhold,  
Should that single image suffer, and accept the proffered  
gold.

But he rather,—‘God has raised me, not to make a  
shameful gain,  
Trafficking in hideous idols, with a service false and vain ;

‘But to count my work unfinished, till I sweep them from  
the world :  
Stand, and see the thing ye sued for, by this hand to ruin  
hurled.’

High he reared his battle-axe, and heavily came down the  
blow :  
Reeled the abominable image, broken, bursten, to and fro ;  
From its shattered side revealing pearls and diamonds,  
showers of gold ;  
More than all that proffered ransom, more than all a  
hundred fold.

—Thou too, Heaven’s commissioned warrior to cast down  
each idol throne  
In thy heart’s profanèd temple, make this faithful deed  
thine own.

Still they plead and still they promise, wilt thou suffer  
them to stand,  
They have pleasures, gifts and treasures, to enrich thee  
at command.

Heed not thou, but boldly strike them ; let descend the  
faithful blow ;  
From their wreck and from their ruin first will thy true  
riches flow.

Thou shalt lose thy life, and find it ; thou shalt boldly  
cast it forth ;  
And then back again receiving, know it in its endless  
worth.

*FROM THE PERSIAN.*

HAPPY name I you, my brethren, who not ever  
doomed to roam,  
In the eternal Father's mansion from the first have dwelt  
at home.

Round the Father's throne for ever standing, in his  
countenance  
Sunning you, you see the seven circling heavens around  
you dance.

Me He has cast out to exile, in a distant land to learn  
How I should love Him, the Father, how for that true  
country yearn.

I lie here, a star of Heaven, fall'n upon this gloomy place,  
Scarce remembering what bright courses I was once  
allowed to trace.

Still in dreams it comes upon me, that I once on wings  
did soar ;  
But or ere my flight commences, this my dream must all  
be o'er.

When the lark is climbing upward on the sunbeam, then  
I feel  
Even as though my spirit also hidden pinions could reveal.

I a rose-bush to this lower soil of earth am fastly bound,  
And with heavenly dew besprinkled, still am rooted to  
the ground.

Yet the life is struggling upward ; striving still with all  
their might  
Yearning buds their cups to open to the warmth and  
heavenly light.

From its stalk released, my flower soars not yet—a butter-  
fly ;  
But meanwhile my fragrant incense evermore I breathe  
on high.

From this gloomy land of vapours, where the hurricanes  
surprise,  
Lightning scorches, and hail lashes, and the thunder  
terrifies,

By my Gardener to his garden I shall once transplanted  
be,  
There where I have been already written from eternity.

O my brothers blooming yonder, unto Him, the Ancient,  
pray,  
That the hour of my transplanting He will not for long  
delay.

## *THE BANISHED KINGS.*

ON a fair ship, borne swiftly o'er the deep,  
A man was lying, wrapt in dreamless sleep ;  
When unawares upon a sunken rock  
That vessel struck, and shattered with the shock.  
But strange ! the plank where lay the sleeper bore  
Him, wrapt in deep sleep ever, to the shore :  
It bore him safely through the foam and spray,  
High up on land, where couched 'mid flowers he lay.  
Sweet tones first woke him from his sleep, when round  
His couch observant multitudes he found :  
All hailed him then, and did before him bow,  
And with one voice exclaimed,—‘ Our King art thou.’  
With jubilant applause they bore him on,  
And set him wondering on a royal throne :  
And some his limbs with royal robes arrayed,  
And some before him duteous homage paid,  
And some brought gifts, all rare and costly things,  
Nature's and Art's profusest offerings :  
Around him counsellors and servants prest,  
All eager to accomplish his behest.  
Wish unaccomplished of his soul was none ;  
The thing that he commanded, it was done.

Much he rejoiced, and he had well-nigh now  
Forgotten whence he hither came, and how ;  
Until at eve, of homage weary grown,  
He craved a season to be left alone.  
Alone in hall magnificent he sate,  
And mused upon the wonder of his fate ;  
When lo ! an aged counsellor, a seer,  
Before unnoticed, to the King drew near ;

—‘ And thee would I too gratulate, my son,  
Who hast thy reign in happy hour begun :  
Seen hast thou the beginning,—yet attend,  
While I shall also show to thee the end.  
That this new fortune do not blind thee quite,  
Both sides regard, the darker with the bright :  
Heed what so many who have reigned before,  
Failing to heed, now rue for evermore.  
Though sure thy state and strong thy throne appear,  
King only art thou for a season here ;  
A time is fixed, albeit unknown to thee,  
Which when it comes, thou banished hence shalt be.  
Round this fair spot, though hidden from the eye  
By mist and vapour, many islands lie :  
Bare are their coasts, and dreary and forlorn,  
And unto them the banished kings are borne ;  
On each of these an exiled king doth mourn.  
For when a new king comes, they bear away  
The old, whom now no vassals more obey ;  
Stripped of his royalties and glories lent,  
Unhonoured, unattended he is sent  
Unto his dreary island-banishment ;  
While all who girt his throne with service true,  
Now fall away from him, to serve the new.  
What I have told thee, lay betimes to heart,  
And ere thy rule is ended, take thy part,  
That thou hereafter on thine isle forlorn  
Do not thy vanished kingdom vainly mourn,  
When nothing of its pomp to thee remains  
On that bare shore, save only memory’s pains.

‘ Much, O my Prince ! my words have thee distrest,  
Thy head has sunk in sorrow on thy breast ;  
Yet idle sorrow helps not—I will show  
A wiser way, which shall true help bestow.



This counsel take—to others given in vain,  
While no belief from them my words might gain.  
Know then, whilst thou art Monarch here, there stand  
Helps for the future many at command ;  
Then, while thou canst, employ them to adorn  
That island whither thou must once be borne.  
Unbuilt and waste and barren now that strand,  
There gush no fountains from the thirsty sand,  
No groves of palm-trees have been planted there,  
Nor plants of odorous scent perfume that air ;  
While all alike have shunned to contemplate  
That they should ever change their flattering state.  
But make thou there provision of delight,  
Till that which now so threatens, may invite ;  
Bid there thy servants build up royal towers,  
And change its barren sands to leafy bowers ;  
Bid fountains there be hewn, and cause to bloom  
Immortal amaranths, shedding rich perfume.  
So when the world, which speaks thee now so fair  
And flatters so, again shall strip thee bare,  
And drive thee naked forth in harshest wise,  
Thou joyfully wilt seek thy paradise.  
*There* will not vex thee memories of the past,  
While hope will heighten here the joys thou hast.  
This do, while yet the power is in thine hand,  
While thou hast helps so many at command.'

Then raised the Prince his head with courage new,  
And what the Sage advised, prepared to do.  
He ruled his realm with meekness, and meanwhile  
He marvellously decked the chosen isle ;  
Bade there his servants build up royal towers,  
And change its barren sands to leafy bowers ;  
Bade fountains there be hewn, and caused to bloom  
Immortal amaranths, shedding rich perfume.

And when he long enough had kept his throne,  
To him sweet odours from that isle were blown ;  
Then knew he that its gardens blooming were,  
And all the yearnings of his soul were there.  
Grief was it not to him, but joy, when they  
His crown and sceptre bade him quit one day ;  
When him his servants rudely did dismiss,  
'Twas not the sentence of his ended bliss,  
But pomp and power he cheerfully forsook,  
And to his isle a willing journey took,  
And found diviner pleasure on that shore,  
Than all, his proudest state had known before.

### SOLOMON.

WHAT child of dust with glory was arrayed  
Like Solomon?—his bidding, while he stood  
In his obedience and first state of good,  
The upper and the under worlds obeyed—  
All spirits, good and evil ; yea, he made  
Hell's concourse and involuntary brood  
Do drudging work for him—hew stones, bring wood,  
And in the rearing of God's temple aid.  
But when he fell from God, that self-same hour  
They fell from him—against him dared to turn,  
Defied his might, his ring, his seal of power ;  
Made him the subject of their mock and scorn ;  
While before them he now must crouch and cower,  
Of strength and wisdom, as of goodness, shorn.

THE  
BALLADS OF HAROUN AL RASCHID.

I.

*THE SPILT PEARLS.*

HIS courtiers of the Caliph crave—  
‘Oh, say how this may be,  
That of thy slaves this Ethiop slave  
Is best beloved by thee?’

‘For he is hideous as the night :  
But when has ever chose  
A nightingale for his delight  
A hueless scentless rose?’

The Caliph then—‘No features fair  
Nor comely mien are his :  
Love is the beauty he doth wear,  
And Love his glory is.

‘Once when a camel of my train  
There fell in narrow street,  
From broken casket rolled amain  
Rich pearls before my feet.

‘I beckoning to my slaves, that I  
Would freely give them these,  
At once upon the spoil they fly,  
The costly boon to seize.

‘One only at my side remained—  
Beside this Ethiop none :  
He, moveless as the steed he reined,  
Beside me sat alone.

“What will thy gain, good fellow, be,  
Thus lingering at my side?”—  
—“My King, that I shall faithfully  
Have guarded thee,” he cried.

“True servant’s title he may wear,  
He only, who has not  
For his lord’s gifts, how rich soe’er,  
His lord himself forgot !”

—So thou alone dost walk before  
Thy God with perfect aim,  
From Him desiring nothing more  
Beside Himself to claim.

For if thou not to Him aspire,  
But to his gifts alone,  
Not Love, but covetous desire,  
Has brought thee to his throne.

While such thy prayer, it climbs above  
In vain ; the golden key  
Of God’s rich treasure-house of love  
Thine own will never be.

## II.

### *THE BARMECIDES.*

**H**AROUN the Just !—yet once that name  
 Of Just the ruler ill became,  
 By whose too hasty sentence died  
 The royal-hearted Barmecide.  
 O Barmecide, of hand and heart  
 So prompt, so forward to impart,  
 Of bounty so unchecked and free,  
 That once a poet sung, how he  
 Would fear thy very hand to touch,  
 Lest he should learn to give too much,  
 Lest, catching the contagion thence  
 Of thy unmatched munificence,  
 A beggar he should soon remain,  
 Helpless his bounty to restrain—  
 O Barmecide of royal heart,  
 My childhood's tears again will start  
 Into mine eyes, the tears I shed,  
 As I remember, when I read  
 Of harsh injustice done to thee,  
 And all thy princely family.  
 —What marvel that the Caliph, stung  
 With secret consciousness of wrong,  
 Or now desiring every trace  
 Of that large bounty to efface,  
 With penalty of death forbade  
 That mourning should for them be made ;  
 That any should with grateful song  
 Their memory in men's hearts prolong ?

—‘And who art thou, that day by day  
 Hast dared my mandate disobey ?

Who art thou whom my guards have found,  
Now standing on some grass-grown mound,  
Now wandering 'mid the ruined towers,  
Fall'n palaces, and wasted bowers  
Of those at length for traitors known,  
And by my justice overthrown—  
Singing a plaintive dirge for them  
Whom my just vengeance did condemn ;  
Till ever, as I learn, around  
Thy steps a listening crowd is found,  
Who still unto thy sad lament  
Do with their sobs and tears consent ;  
While in the bosom of that throng  
Rise thoughts that do their Monarch wrong  
What doom I did for this assign  
Thou knewest, and that doom is thine.'

But then the offender :—' Give me room,  
And I will gladly take my doom,  
O King, to spend my latest breath,  
Ere I am borne unto my death,  
In telling for what highest grace  
I was beholden to that race,  
Whose memory my heart hath kept,  
Whose perished glories I have wept.  
For then, at least, it will appear  
That not in disobedience mere  
Thy mandate high I overpast.  
—O King, I was the least and last  
Of all the servitors of him,  
Whose glory in thy frown grew dim,—  
The least and last—yet he one day  
To me, his meanest slave, did say  
That he was fain my guest to be,  
And the next day would sup with me.

More time I willingly had craved,  
But my excuses all he waved,  
And by no train accompanied,  
His two sons only at his side,  
At my poor lodging lighted down,  
Which at the limits of the town  
Stood in a close and narrow street.  
Him I and mine did humbly greet,  
Standing before him while he shared  
What we meanwhile had best prepared  
Of entertainment, though the best  
Was poor and mean for such a guest.  
But supper done, with cheerful mien,  
"Thy house," he cried, "I have not seen,  
Thy gardens ;—let me pace awhile  
Along some cool and shadowy aisle."  
I thought he mocked me, but replied,  
"Possessions have I not so wide :  
For house, another room with this  
Our only habitation is ;  
And garden have I none to show,  
Unless that narrow court below,  
Shut in with lofty walls, that name  
In right of four dwarf shrubs may claim."  
—"Nay, nay," he answered, "there is more,  
If only we could find the door."  
Again I told him, but in vain,  
That he had seen my whole domain.  
—"Nay, go then quick, a mason call."  
Him bade he straightway pierce the wall.  
—"But shall we in this wise invade  
A neighbour's house ?"—No heed he paid,  
And I stood dumb, and wondering  
Whereto he would the issue bring.  
Anon he through the opening past,  
He and his sons, and I the last ;

When suddenly myself I found  
In ample space of garden ground,  
Or rather in a Paradise  
Of rare and wonderful device,  
With stately walks and alleys wide,  
Far stretching upon every side ;  
And streams upon whose either bank  
Stood lofty platanes, rank by rank,  
And marble fountains, scattering high  
Illumined dew-drops in the sky ;  
And making a low tinkling sound,  
As sliding down from mound to mound,  
They did at last their courses take  
Down to a calm and lucid lake,  
By which, on gently sloping height,  
There stood a palace of delight ;  
And many slaves, but all of rare  
And perfect beauty, marshalled there,  
Did each to me incline the knee,  
Exclaiming all—" Thy servants we."

‘And then my lord cried laughing—"Nay,  
When this is thine, how could'st thou say  
That thou had'st shown me all before ?  
Thine is it all."—He said no more,  
But at my benefactor's feet  
I falling, thanks would render meet.  
He, scarcely listening, turned his head,  
And to his eldest son he said :  
" This house, these gardens, 'twere in vain,  
Unless enabled to maintain,  
That he should call them his ;—my son,  
Let us not leave this grace half done."  
Who then replied—" My farms beyond  
The Tigris I by seal'd bond



This night before we part, will see  
Made over unto him in fee."  
—" 'Tis well ; but there will months ensue,  
Ere his incomings will be due.  
What shall there, the meanwhile, be done ? "  
He turned unto his younger son,  
Who answered—" I will bid that gold,  
Ten thousand pieces, shall be told  
Unto his steward presently ;  
These shall his urgent needs supply.'  
'Twas done upon that very eve ;  
And done, anon they took their leave,  
And left me free to contemplate  
The wonders of my novel state.

‘ Prince of the Faithful, mighty King,  
My fortunes from this source had spring,  
Which, if they since that time have grown,  
Him their first author still they own.  
Nor when that name, which *was* the praise  
Of all the world, on evil days  
Had fall’n, was I content to let  
Be quite forgotten the large debt  
I owed to him ;—content to die,  
If such shall be thy pleasure high,  
And my offence shall seem to thee  
Deserving of such penalty.’

What marvel that the King who heard  
Was in his inmost bosom stirred ?  
What marvel that he owned the force  
Of late regret and vain remorse ?  
That spreading palm, whose boughs had made,  
Far stretching, such an ample shade  
For many a wanderer through life’s waste,  
He had hewn down in guilty haste ;

That fountain free, that springing well  
 Of goodness inexhaustible,  
 His hand had stopped it, ne'er again  
 To slake the thirst of weary men ;  
 That genial sun, which evermore  
 Did on a cold chill world outpour  
 Its rays of love and life and light,  
 'Twas he who quenched in darkest night.  
 What marvel that he owned the force  
 Of late regret and vain remorse,  
 And (all he could) now freely gave  
 The life the other did not crave ?  
 Nay more, the offender did dismiss  
 With gifts and praise ; nor only this,  
 But did the unrighteous law reverse,  
 Which had forbidden to rehearse,  
 And in the minds of men prolong,  
 By grateful speech or plaintive song,  
 The bounteous acts and graces wide,  
 The goodness of the Barmecide.

## III.

## THE FESTIVAL.

FIVE hundred princely guests before  
 Haroun Al Raschid sate :  
 Five hundred princely guests or more  
 Admired his royal state :

For never had that glory been  
 So royally displayed,  
 Nor ever such a gorgeous scene  
 Had eye of man surveyed.

He, most times meek of heart, yet now  
Of spirit too elate,  
Exclaimed—‘ Before me Cæsars bow,  
On me two empires wait.

‘ Yet all our glories something lack,  
We do our triumphs wrong,  
Until to us reflected back  
In mirrors clear of song.

‘ Call him then, unto whom this power  
Is given, this skill sublime—  
Now win from us some splendid dower  
With song that fits the time.’

—‘ My King, as I behold thee now,  
May I behold thee still,  
While prostrate worlds before thee bow,  
And wait upon thy will !

‘ May evermore this clear pure heaven,  
Whence every speck and stain  
Of trouble far away is driven,  
Above thy head remain !’

The Caliph cried—‘ Thou wishest well ;  
There waits thee golden store  
For this—but, oh ! resume the spell,  
I fain would listen more.’

—‘ Drink thou life’s sweetest goblet up,  
O King, and may its wine,  
For others’ lips a mingled cup,  
Be all unmixed for thine.

‘Live long—the shadow of no grief  
Come ever near to thee :  
As thou in height of place art chief,  
So chief in gladness be.’

Haroun Al Raschid cried again—  
‘I thank thee—but proceed,  
And now take up a higher strain,  
And win a higher meed.’

Around that high magnific hall  
One glance the poet threw  
On courtiers, king, and festival,  
And did the strain renew :

—‘And yet, and yet—shalt thou at last  
Lie stretched on bed of death :  
Then, when thou drawest thick and fast  
With sobs thy painful breath,

‘When Azrael glides through guarded gate,  
Through hosts that camp around  
Their lord in vain—and will not wait,  
When thou art sadly bound

‘Unto thine house of dust alone,  
O King, when thou must die,—  
This pomp a shadow thou shalt own,  
This glory all a lie.’

Then darkness on all faces hung,  
And through the banquet went  
Low sounds the murmuring guests among  
Of angry discontent ;

And him anon they fiercely urge—  
‘What guerdon shall be thine?  
What does it, this untimely dirge,  
’Mid feasts, and flowers, and wine?’

‘Our lord demanded in his mirth  
A strain to heighten glee ;  
But, lo ! at thine his tears come forth  
In current swift and free.’

—‘Peace—not to him rebukes belong,  
But rather highest grace ;  
He gave me what I asked, a song  
To fit the time and place.’

All voices at that voice were stilled ;  
Again the Caliph cried,—  
He saw our mouths with laughter filled,  
He saw us drunk with pride ;

And bade us know that every road,  
By monarch trod or slave,  
Thick set with thorns, with roses strewed,  
Must issue in the grave.’

## THE TALENTS.

IMITATED FROM THE PERSIAN.

THOU that in life's crowded city art arrived, thou  
know'st not how,  
By what path or on what errand—list and learn thine  
errand now.

From the palace to the city on the business of thy King  
Thou wert sent at early morning, to return at evening.

Dreamer waken, loiterer hasten ; what thy task is, under-  
stand ;  
Thou art here to purchase substance, and the price is in  
thy hand.

Has the tumult of the market all thy sense confused and  
drowned ?  
Do its glistening wares entice thee ? or its shouts and  
cries confound ?

Oh ! beware lest thy Lord's business be forgotten, while  
thy gaze  
Is on every show and pageant which the giddy square  
displays.

Barter not his gold for pebbles ; do not trade in vanities—  
Pearls there are of price and jewels for the purchase of  
the wise.

And know this, at thy returning thou wilt surely find  
the King  
With an open book before him, waiting to make reckoning.  
Then large honours will the faithful earnest service of  
one day  
Reap of him, but one day's folly largest penalties will  
pay.

*THE EASTERN NARCISSUS.*

THOU art the fox, O man, that, maugre all  
His cunning, did into the water fall.  
This fox was travelling once o'er hill and dell,  
And reached at length the margin of a well ;  
His head he stooped into the well, when, lo !  
Another fox did in the water show.  
He winks, he nods—the other fox replies :  
' What, ho ! we must be better friends,' he cries ;  
And more acquaintance covetous to win,  
Without a thought jumped Reynard headlong in.  
He reached the bottom at a single bound,  
But there no fox beside himself he found.  
Upward again he now would gladly spring,  
But to ascend was no such easy thing :  
He splashes, struggles, and in sad voice cries,  
' Fool that I was ! I deemed myself more wise.  
Ah wretch ! will no one come unto my aid ? '—  
But prayer and effort both were vainly made :  
Soon did the water drag him down to death ;  
With a last cry he sank the waves beneath.

Thou art the fox of whom the fable tells ;  
This world of sense the devil's well of wells :  
Thou saw'st reflected thine own image there,  
And didst plunge headlong in without a care :  
Oh happy ! if thou struggle back to day,  
Ere the strong whirlpool drags thee down for aye.

## *THE SEASONS.*

### I. WINTER.

PURE ermine now the mountains wear,  
And clothe with this their shoulders bare.

The dark pine wears the snow, as head  
Of Ethiop doth white turban wear.

The floods are armed with silver shields,  
Through which the Sun's sword cannot fare ;

For he who once in mid heaven rode,  
In golden arms, on golden chair,

Now through small corner of the sky  
Creeps low, nor warms the foggy air.

To mutter 'twixt their teeth the streams,  
In icy fetters, scarcely dare.

Hushed is the busy hum of life ;  
'Tis silence in the earth and air.

From mountains issues the gaunt wolf,  
And from its forest depths the bear.

Where is the garden's beauty now ?  
The thorn is here ; the rose, oh where ?

The trees like giant skeletons,  
Wave high their fleshless arms and bare ;



Or stand like wrestlers stripped and bold,  
And strongest winds to battle dare.

It seems a thing impossible  
That earth her glories should repair ;

That ever this bleak world again  
Should bright and beauteous mantle wear,

Or sounds of life again be heard  
In this dead earth and vacant air.

## II. SPRING.

WHO was it that so lately said,  
All pulses in thine heart were dead,

Old Earth, that now in festal robes  
Appearest, as a bride new wed ?

O wrapt so late in winding-sheet,  
Thy winding-sheet, oh ! where is fled ?

Lo ! 'tis an emerald carpet now,  
Where the young monarch, Spring, may tread.

He comes,—and, a defeated king,  
Old Winter to the hills is fled.

The warm wind broke his frosty spear,  
And loosed the helmet from his head ;

And he weak showers of arrowy sleet  
From his strongholds has vainly sped.

All that was sleeping is awake,  
And all is living that was dead.

Who listens now, can hear the streams  
Leap tinkling down their pebbly bed ;

Or see them, from their fetters free,  
Like silver snakes the meadows thread.

The joy, the life, the hope of earth,  
They slept awhile, they were not dead :

Oh thou who say'st thy sere heart ne'er  
With verdure can again be spread ;

Oh thou who mournest them that sleep,  
Low lying in an earthy bed ;

Look out on this reviving world,  
And be new hopes within thee bred.

### III. SUMMER.

NOW seems all nature to conspire,  
As to dissolve the world in fire,

Which dies among its odorous sweets,  
A Phoenix on its funeral pyre.

Simoom breathes hotly from the waste  
The green earth quits her green attire ;

Floats o'er the plain the liquid heat,  
Cheating the traveller's fond desire—

Illusion fair of lake and stream,  
Receding as he draweth nigher.

Ice is more precious now than gold,  
Snow more than silver men desire.

'Tis far to seek unfailing wells  
For tender maid or aged sire ;

Men know the worth of water now,  
And learn to prize God's blessing higher ;

The shallow pools have disappeared,  
Caked into iron is the mire.

Through clouds of dust the crimson sun  
Glares on the earth in lurid ire ;

The parched earth with thirsty lips  
Is gasping, ready to expire.

Oh happy, who by liquid streams  
In shady gardens can retire,

Where murmuring falls and whispering trees  
Sweet slumber to invite conspire ;

Or where he may deceive the time  
With volume sage, or pensive lyre.

## IV. AUTUMN.

THINE, Autumn, is unwelcome lore—  
To tell the world its pomp is o'er :

To whisper in the rose's ear,  
That all her beauty is no more ;

And bid her own the faith how vain,  
That Spring to her so lately swore.

A queen deposed, she quits her state ;  
The nightingales her fall deplore :

The hundred-voic'd bird may woo  
The thousand-leav'd flower no more.

The jasmine sinks its head in shame,  
The sharp east wind its tresses shore ;

And robbed in passing cruelly  
The tulip of the crown it wore.

The lily's sword is broken now,  
That was so bright and keen before ;

And not a blast can blow, but strews  
With leaf of gold the earth's dank floor.

The piping winds sing Nature's dirge,  
As through the forest bleak they roar,

Whose leafy screen, like locks of eld,  
Each day shows scantier than before.

Thou fadest as a flower, O man !  
Of food for musing here is store.

Oh man ! thou fallest as a leaf :  
Pace thoughtfully earth's leaf-strewn floor ;

Welcome the sadness of the time,  
And lay to heart this natural lore.



BY Grecian annals it remained untold,  
But may be read in Eastern legend old,  
How when great Alexander died, he bade  
That his two hands uncovered should be laid  
Outside the bier—for men therewith to see,  
(Men who had seen him in his majesty,)  
That he had gone the common way of all,  
And nothing now his own in death might call ;  
Nor of the treasures of two empires aught  
Within those empty hands unto the grave had brought

MOSES AND JETHRO.

WHEN Moses once on Horeb's rocky steep,  
A banished man, was keeping Jethro's sheep,  
What time his flocks along the hills and dells  
Made music with their bleatings and their bells,  
He by the thoughts that stirred within him, drawn  
Deep in the mountain, heard at early dawn  
One who in prayer did all his soul outpour,  
With strong heart-earnestness, but nothing more :  
For strange his words were, savage and uncouth,  
And little did he know in very sooth  
Of that great Lord to whom his vows were made.  
The other for a moment listening staid,  
Until—his patience altogether spent—  
' Good friend, for whom are these same noises meant ?  
For Him who dwells on high ? this babbling vain,  
Which vexes even a man's ear with pain ?  
Oh peace ! this is not God to praise, but blame ;  
Unmannerly applause brings only shame :  
Oh, stop thy mouth ; thou dost but heap up sin,  
Such prayer as this can no acceptance win,  
But were enough to make God's blessings cease.'  
Rebuked, the simple herdsman held his peace,  
And only crying—' Thou hast rent my heart,'  
He fled into the desert far apart :  
While with himself, and with his zeal content,  
His steps the son of Amram homeward bent,  
And ever to himself applauds lent—  
Much wondering that he did not find the same  
From his adopted sire, but rather blame,  
Who having heard, replied—

'Was this well done?'

What wouldst thou have to answer, O my son,

If God should say in anger unto thee—  
‘Why hast thou driven my worshipper from Me?  
Why hast thou robbed Me of my dues of prayer?  
Well pleasing offering in my sight they were,  
And music in mine ears, if not in thine.’  
HE doth its bounds to every soul assign,  
Its voice, its language—using which to tell  
His praise, He counts that it doth praise Him well ;  
And when there is a knocking at Heav’n’s gate,  
And at Heav’n’s threshold many suppliants wait,  
Then simple Love will often enter in,  
Where haughty Science may no entrance win.  
That poor man’s words were rougher husks than thine,  
Which yet might hold a kernel more divine,  
Rude vessel guarding a more precious wine.  
*All* prayer is childlike ; falls as short of HIM  
The wisdom of the wisest Seraphim,  
As the child’s small conceit of heavenly things ;  
A line to sound his depths no creature brings.  
Before the Infinite, the One, the All,  
Must every difference disappear and fall,  
There is no wise nor simple, great nor small.  
For Him the little clod of common earth  
Has to the diamond no inferior worth ;  
Nor doth the Ocean, world-encompassing,  
Unto his thought more sense of vastness bring  
Than tiny dewdrop ; atoms in his eye  
A sun, and a sun-mote, dance equally :  
Not that the great (here understand aright),  
Is worthless as the little in his sight,  
Rather the little precious as the great,  
And, pondered in his scales, of equal weight :  
So that herein lies comfort—not despair,  
As though we were too little for his care.  
God is so great, there can be nothing small  
To Him—so loving He embraces all,—

So wise, the wisdom and simplicity  
 Of man for Him must on a level be :  
 But being this, more prompt to feel the wrong,  
 And to resent it with displeasure strong,  
 When from Him there is rudely, proudly turned  
 The meanest soul that loved Him, and that yearned  
 After his grace. Oh haste then and begone,  
 Rebuild the altar thou hast overthrown ;  
 Replace the offering which on that did stand,  
 Till rudely scattered by thy hasty hand—  
 Removing, if thou canst, what made it rise  
 A faulty and imperfect sacrifice :  
 And henceforth, in this gloomy world and dark,  
 Prize every taper yielding faintest spark,  
 And if perchance it burn not clear and bright,  
 Trim, if thou canst, but do not quench it quite.'

### GHAZEL.

WHAT is the good man and the wise ?  
 Ofttimes a pearl which none doth prize ;

Or jewel rare, which men account  
 A common pebble, and despise.

Set forth upon the world's bazaar,  
 It mildly gleams, but no one buys ;

Till it in anger Heaven withdraws  
 From the world's undiscerning eyes ;

And in its shell the pearl again,  
 And in its mine the jewel lies.



## *PROVERBS.*

TURKISH AND PERSIAN.

### I.

**S**ECTS seventy-two, men say, the world infest,  
And each and all lie hidden in thy breast.

### II.

One staff of Moses, slight as it appears,  
Will break in shivers Pharaoh's thousand spears.

### III.

Forget not death, O man ! for thou may'st be  
Of one thing certain,—he forgets not thee.

### IV.

The world's a tavern, where to-night men swill ;  
To-morrow brings the head-ache and the bill.

### V.

Speaks one of good which falls not to thy lot,  
He also speaks of ill which thou hast not.

### VI.

Boast not thy service rendered to the King ;  
'Tis grace enough he lets thee service bring.

### VII.

Lies once thy cart in quagmire overthrown,  
Thy path to thee by thousands will be shown.

### VIII.

Oh square thyself for use : a stone that may  
Fit in the wall, is left not in the way.

## IX.

Never the game has happy issue won,  
Which with the cotton has the fire begun.

## X.

The sandal tree, most sacred tree of all,  
Perfumes the very axe which bids it fall.

## XI.

Dost thou the raven for a guide invite,  
Count it not strange on carrion to alight.

## XII.

Each man has more of four things than he knows ;  
What four are these?—sins, debts, and years, and foes.

## XIII.

The king but with one apple has made free,  
And straight his servants have cut down the tree.

## XIV.

Two friends will in a needle's eye repose,  
But the whole world is narrow for two foes.

## XV.

Rejoice not when thine enemy doth die,  
Thou hast not won immortal life thereby.

## XVI.

Be bold to bring forth fruit, though stick and stone  
At the fruit-bearing trees are flung alone.

## XVII.

This world is like a carcass in the way :  
Who eagerly throng round it, dogs are they.

XVIII.

While in thy lips thy words thou dost confine,  
Thou art their lord : once uttered, they are thine.

XIX.

Oh seize the instant time ; none ever will  
With waters that have past impel the mill.

XX.

Boldly thy bread upon the waters throw ;  
And if the fishes do not, God will know.

XXI.

What will not time and toil ?—by these a worm  
Will into silk a mulberry leaf transform.

XXII.

There is no ointment for the wolf's sore eyes,  
Like clouds of dust which from the sheep arise.

XXIII.

When what thou willest has befall'n not, still  
This help remains, what has befall'n to will.

XXIV.

Inquire not if thy soul be foul or fair,  
But if tow'rd God its efforts striving are.

XXV.

The lily with ten tongues can hold its peace ;  
Wilt thou with one from babbling never cease ?

XXVI.

How shall the praise of silence best be told ?  
To speak is silver, to hold peace is gold.

## XXVII.

Thy word unspoken thou canst any day  
 Speak, but thy spoken ne'er again unsay.

## XXVIII.

The world's great wheel in silence circles round,  
 A housewife's spindle with unceasing sound.

## XXIX.

O babbler, couldst thou but the cause divine,  
 Why one tongue only, but two ears are thine !

## XXX.

What mystic roses in thy breast will blow,  
 If on the wind their leaves thou straightway strow ?

*HARMOSAN.*

NOW the third and fatal conflict for the Persian  
 throne was done,  
 And the Moslem's fiery valour had the crowning victory  
 won.

Harmosan, the last and boldest the invader to defy,  
 Captive overborne by numbers, they were bringing forth  
 to die.

Then exclaimed that noble captive—' Lo ! I perish in my  
 thirst,  
 Give me but one drink of water, and let then arrive the  
 worst.'

In his hand he took the goblet, but awhile the draught  
forbore,  
Seeming doubtfully the purpose of the foemen to explore.

Well might then have paused the bravest, for around him  
angry foes  
With a hedge of naked weapons did that lonely man  
enclose.

‘But what fear’st thou?’ cried the Caliph;—‘is it, friend,  
a secret blow?  
Fear it not; our gallant Moslem no such treacherous  
dealing know.

‘Thou may’st quench thy thirst securely, for thou shalt  
not die before  
Thou hast drunk that cup of water; this reprieve is  
thine—no more.’

Quick the Satrap dashed the goblet down to earth with  
ready hand,  
And the liquid sank for ever, lost amid the burning sand.

‘Thou hast said that mine my life is, till the water of that  
cup  
I have drained—then bid thy servants that spilt water  
gather up.’

For a moment stood the Caliph as by doubtful passions  
stirred;  
Then exclaimed,—‘For ever sacred must remain a  
monarch’s word.

‘Bring another cup, and straightway to the noble Persian  
give:  
Drink, I said before, and perish; now I bid thee drink  
and live.’

## *LIFE THROUGH DEATH.*

### I.

A PAGAN king tormented fiercely all,  
Who would not on his senseless idols call,  
Nor worship them :—and him were brought before  
A mother and her child, with many more.  
The child, fast bound, was flung into the flame,  
Her faith the mother did in fear disclaim :  
But when she cried—‘ O sweetest, live as I,’  
He answered—‘ Mother dear, I do not die ;  
Come, mother, bliss of heaven is here my gain,  
Although I seem to you in fiery pain.  
This fire serves only for your eyes to cheat,  
Like Jesus’ breath of balm ’tis cool and sweet.  
Come, learn what riches with our God are stored,  
And how He feeds me at the angelic board.  
Come, prove this fire ; like water-floods it cools,  
While your world’s water burns like sulphur pools.  
Come, Abraham’s secret, when he found alone  
Sweet roses in the furnace, here is known.  
Into a world of death thou barest me ;  
O mother, death, not life, I owed to thee.  
Fair world I deemed it once of glorious pride,  
Till in this furnace I was deified ;  
But now I know it for a dungeon-tomb,  
Since God has brought me into larger room.  
Oh ! now at length I live : from my pure heaven  
Each cloud, that stained it once, away is driven :  
Come, mother, come, and with thee many bring ;  
Cry, “ Here is spread the banquet of the King ;”  
Come, all ye faithful, come, and dare to prove  
The bitter-sweet, the pain and bliss of love.’

So cried the child unto that crowd of men ;  
All hearts with fiery longings kindled then ;  
Towàrd the pile they headlong rushing came,  
And soon their souls fed sweetly on the flame.

## II.

A DEWDROP falling on the wild sea-wave,  
Exclaimed in fear—‘ I perish in this grave ;’  
But in a shell received, that drop of dew  
Unto a pearl of marvellous beauty grew ;  
And, happy now, the grace did magnify  
Which thrust it forth, as it had feared, to die ;—  
Until again, ‘ I perish quite,’ it said,  
Torn by rude diver from its ocean bed :  
Oh unbelieving !—so it came to gleam,  
Chief jewel in a monarch’s diadem.

## III.

THE seed must die, before the corn appears  
Out of the ground, in blade and fruitful ears.  
Low have those ears before the sickle lain,  
Ere thou canst treasure up the golden grain.  
The grain is crushed, before the bread is made ;  
And the bread broke, ere life to man conveyed.  
Oh ! be content to die, to be laid low,  
And to be crushed, and to be broken so,  
If thou upon God’s table may’st be bread,  
Life-giving food for souls an-hungerèd.

## THE WORLD.

• O BEAUTEOUS world, what features fair  
Thine needs would show beyond compare,  
If it were possible to find  
Thy glories all in one combined !  
Show me, O Lord, the world—the bright  
Fair world reveal unto my sight.’

Such prayer the young man made, whose way  
Soon after through the desert lay,  
Where he far off a woman spied,  
Wandering, by none accompanied.  
‘Who art thou?’ he exclaimed.—“In me  
See her whom thou hast longed to see.”  
—‘What meanest thou?’ More plain reply  
This time she made—“The World am I.”  
—‘Then let me see thy countenance fair,  
Whose beauty doth all hearts ensnare.’  
She from her face the veil withdrew,  
And straight the hidden was in view ;  
A visage painted all and bleared,  
Where signs of all things foul appeared :  
One bloody hand she raised on high,  
Crooked was the other and awry.  
‘How? what is this?’ he shuddering  
Exclaimed—‘what mean’st thou, loathsome thing?’  
“I with this bloody hand,” she said,  
“Strike evermore my lovers dead :  
That crookèd hand its shape has won  
With beckoning new lovers on ;  
Those ever hurl I forth with might,  
And these with sorceries I invite.



Myself must wonder, being so,  
I never dearth of lovers know."  
—‘But tell me yet, how this may be,  
That when such thousands wait on thee  
Already, thou dost ever seek  
More lovers still?’ She then did speak :  
“Though these be many, never yet  
A man among them have I met ;  
Who rightly bear of man the name,  
My company avoid like shame ;  
And thus remain I desolate,  
Even while on me such thousands wait.”

My brother, let her answer be  
Deep graven on thy memory :  
A man, my brother, wouldst thou prove,  
Far keep thee from this beldame’s love.

### THE SUPPLIANT.

ALL night the lonely suppliant prayed,  
All night his earnest crying made ;  
Till standing by his side at morn,  
The Tempter said in bitter scorn :  
‘Oh ! peace : what profit do you gain  
From empty words and babblings vain ?’  
“Come, Lord—oh, come !” you cry alway ;  
You pour your heart out night and day ;  
Yet still no murmur of reply,—  
No voice that answers, “Here am I.”

Then sank that stricken heart in dust,  
That word had withered all its trust :

No strength retained it now to pray,  
For faith and hope had fled away :  
And ill that mourner now had fared,  
Thus by the Tempter's art ensnared,  
But that at length beside his bed  
His sorrowing Angel stood, and said,—  
' Doth it repent thee of thy love,  
That never now is heard above  
Thy prayer, that now not any more  
It knocks at heav'n's gate as before ?'

—" I am cast out—I find no place,  
No hearing at the throne of grace :  
' Come, Lord—oh, come !' I cry always,  
I pour my heart out night and day,  
Yet never until now have won  
The answer,—' Here am I, my son.' "

—' Oh, dull of heart ! enclosed doth lie  
In each " Come, Lord," a " Here am I."  
Thy love, thy longing, are not thine,  
Reflections of a love divine :  
Thy very prayer to thee was given,  
Itself a messenger from heaven.  
Whom God rejects, they are not so ;  
Strong bands are round them in their woe ;  
Their hearts are bound with bands of brass,  
That sigh or crying cannot pass.  
All treasures did the Lord impart  
To Pharaoh, save a contrite heart :  
All other gifts unto his foes  
He freely gives, nor grudging knows ;  
But love's sweet smart and costly pain  
A treasure for his friends remain.'

## THE MONK AND SINNER.

IN days of old, when holy prophets trod  
This earth, the living oracles of God,  
What time one such his mission did fulfil,  
There lived a youth, a prodigy of ill :  
So foul the tablets of his heart and black,  
That Satan's self from them had started back ;  
Him as the plague sought every soul to shun,  
At him in horror pointed every one.  
And in the city where this sinful youth  
All bosoms filled with horror or with ruth,  
In the same city dwelt a Monk as well,  
Round whom all crowded when he left his cell ;  
And those who only touched his garment's hem,  
Counted that heaven was nearer unto them—  
Such name for prayer and penance he had gained :  
And he one day that Prophet entertained :  
When in their sight this sinner did appear,  
Who yet for awe presumed not to draw near,  
But falling back, like moth from dazzling light,  
Lay on the ground, as blinded by their sight.  
And as in spring relents the frozen ground,  
Even so it seemed as though his heart unbound ;  
Streamed from his eyes like loosened floods the tears :  
' Woe's me,' he cried ; ' for thirty guilty years  
My life's best treasure have I spent in vain,  
And death and hell are now my only gain.  
I totter on a dark chasm's dreadful brink,  
Hell's jaws are yawning for me, and I sink :  
Yet since none ever Thou didst from Thee cast,  
I stretch my hands to Thee ; Lord, hold them fast.

But here the Monk with lifted eyebrows—' Peace,  
Blasphemer,—from thy useless clamours cease :

And darest thou, thus steeped in sin, make free  
With him, God's holy Prophet, and with me ?  
My God, this one thing grant me, that I may  
Stand far from this man on the judgment day.'—  
More he had said, but on the Prophet broke  
Swift inspiration, and he straightway spoke :  
' Two here have prayed—diverse has been their prayer,  
Yet granted both their supplications are.  
He who in mire of sin now thirty years  
Has rolled, forgiveness asks with many tears :  
Ne'er yet has head of contrite sinner lain  
Upon the threshold of God's throne in vain.  
All he has sinned to him shall be forgiven ;  
Him God has chosen a denizen of heaven.  
That Monk has prayed upon the other hand  
That he may never near this sinner stand ;  
That this may be so, hell his place must be,  
Where never more this sinner he shall see.  
Whose robe is white, but heart is black with pride,  
He for himself hell's gates has opened wide,  
For, weighed in God the all-sufficient's scale,  
Not claims nor righteousness of man avail ;  
But these are costly in his sight indeed,—  
Repentance, contrite shame, and sense of need.'

=====

WHAT, thou askest, is the heaven, and the round  
earth and the sea,  
And their dwellers, men and angels,—if with God com-  
pared they be ?

Heaven and earth, and men and angels, all that any-  
where is named,  
Matched with Him, lose name and being, and to nothing  
shrink ashamed.

So 'tis seen when this world's Sultan in his glory forth  
doth ride,  
Highest, lowest, beggars, Emirs, all alike their faces hide.

Its unnumbered billows rolling, great to thee the Ocean  
seems ;  
Great the Sun, from golden fountains pouring out a flood  
of beams :

Yet the faithful, God-enlightened, know another wonder-  
land,  
Where the Ocean is a dew-drop, and the Sun a grain of  
sand.

In the forest's dark recesses hast thou marked the glow-  
worm's light,  
In a green dell un beholden, twinkling through the storm  
and night ?

Once a pilgrim said—' O gentle star, that shinest nightly,  
say,  
Wherefore thou appearest never in the bright and glorious  
day ? '

Hear what then the gentle glow-worm answered from its  
mouth of fire,—

' In the gloomy forest shine I, but before the sun expire.'

## THE CERTAINTIES OF FAITH.

SOME children, of their lessons grown quite tired,  
As well might be, a holiday desired.

‘Were but the master sometimes ill,’ they say,

‘We might perchance obtain such holiday ;

But he is sturdier than a rock, and so

Our lessons never interruption know.

Oh, if we only could devise some trick,

By which we might persuade him he was sick !’

A roguish urchin then stood up and said,

‘Hear a device which comes into my head.

When school-time comes to-morrow, I will say,—

“What is it, master? are you well to-day?”

Then you, my brother, entering presently,

“Oh, master, what has happened to you?” cry.

Then all exclaim, “The master what can ail?

He looks so flushed, then presently so pale.”

You’ll see a man will credit any stuff,

If only it is told him oft enough.’

The next day so they did ; the first went in,

And did with serious face the game begin.

‘Dear master, you are very ill to-day.’

“Peace, fool,” he answered, “I am well, I say.”

Yet though the lie had not its end attained,

Some slight misgiving in his soul remained ;

And when the next the same tale did repeat,

‘Oh, Sir, you look as in a fever heat,’

And third and fourth chimed in with them, at last

The error in his soul was rooted fast.

Snatching his cloak, he hurried home in fear ;

“To-day at home your lessons I will hear.”

Entering his house he chid his wife, and said

She cared not if he were alive or dead.

Wrapt in a blanket on the bed he sate,  
And crying oh ! and ah ! bemoaned his fate :  
While the sad urchins, listening to his sighs,  
With all his pains appeared to sympathize.  
Yet since from toil they had not yet escaped,  
Upon the nonce a new device they shaped :  
No sooner one to say his task drew nigh,  
And oped his mouth, than all the rest did cry,  
' Oh, not so loud ; your shrieking, prithee, cease,  
See how you make his fever to increase.'  
" In truth, the fever rises higher still,"  
The master answered—" I am very ill.  
Go, children, go, and leave me here alone."  
They make their bows, and in a trice are gone :  
Like birds, when one their cage doth open leave,  
They darted forth, each laughing in his sleeve.

What thou of God and of thyself dost know,  
So know that none can force thee to forego ;  
For ah ! his knowledge is a worthless art,  
Which forming of himself no vital part,  
The foremost man he meets with readier skill  
In sleight of words, can rob him of at will.  
Faith feels not of *her* lore more sure nor less,  
If all the world deny it or confess :  
Did the whole world exclaim, ' Like Solomon,  
Thou sittest high on Wisdom's noblest throne,'  
She would not, than before, be surer then,  
Nor draw more courage from the assent of men.  
Or did the whole world cry, ' O fond and vain !  
What idle dream is this which haunts thy brain ?'  
To the whole world Faith boldly would reply,  
' The whole world can, but I can never, lie.'

## THE PANTHEIST;

### THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

ONE who in subtle questions took delight,  
Came running to my lodging late one night,  
And straight began :—‘ Wilt thou affirm that sin  
Had in man’s will its root and origin,  
When that will did itself from God proceed?  
Whate’er then followed, He must have decreed.  
If evil, then, be not against God’s will,  
’Tis wrongly named, it is not truly ill :  
Rather the world a chess-board we should name,  
And God both sides is playing of the game :  
Moses and Pharaoh *seem* opposed, for they  
Do thus God’s greatness on two sides display ;  
They seem opposed, but at the root are one,  
And each his part allotted has well done ;  
And that which men so blindly evil call,  
And hate and fear, this evil, after all,  
Is but as those discordant notes whereby  
Well-skilled musicians heighten melody ;—  
But as the dark ground cunning painters lay,  
To bring the bright hues into clearer day :  
’Tis good as yet imperfect, incomplete ;  
Fruit that is sour, while passing on to sweet.’

Then I, who knew the world had travelled o’er  
This line of thought a thousand times before,  
Would all debate have willingly put by,  
Yet with this tale at last must make reply :



‘ The head of Seid his comrade struck one day ;  
Seid meant the blow in earnest to repay ;  
But then the striker—“ Pardon, friend, the blow—  
I am inquiring, and two things would know :  
See, when my hand did on your head alight,  
Straight various bruises there appeared in sight.  
Now, prithee, give me a reply to this,  
If head or hand their ultimate cause is ?  
And if you really do with them agree  
Who but in pain a lesser pleasure see ? ”  
Seid then—“ O fool ! my agony is great,  
And think’st thou I can idly speculate ? ”  
The same I say ;—let him display his skill  
On the world’s woe, who does not feel its ill ;  
Let speculate the man who feels no pain,  
To whom the world is all a pageant vain,  
An empty show stretched out that he may sit,  
And crying “ Fie ! ” or “ Bravo ! ” show his wit.  
Me the deep feeling of its mighty woe  
Robs of all wish herein my skill to show ;  
I only know that evil is no dream,  
A thing that is, and does not merely seem :  
Nor ask I now who open left the well,  
Whereinto, walking carelessly, I fell ;  
Not how I stumbled in the pit, but how  
Best to emerge, is all my question now.’

*THE RIGHTEOUS OF THE WORLD.*

THE Rabbis, who devise strange dooms of wrath and  
ill,

For such as knew not here God's perfect law and will,  
Yet these have told how they, as many as with true  
And faithful heart fulfilled and loved the good they knew,  
The Righteous of the world, shall once delivered be  
From darkness, and brought in God's countenance to see :  
Which thing they thus recount :—It shall befall one day  
In those eternal courts where it is day alway,  
Before Him will the Just sit ranged in order meet,  
The holy Angels all will stand upon their feet ;  
And while they hymn the praise, the glory and the worth  
Of Him who by a word created heaven and earth,  
Will ever high and higher be borne and swept along  
Heaven's azure-vaulted roofs the full concert of song :  
Then will that mighty voice of jubilee be heard,  
Until from end to end the spacious world is stirred,  
Until even those that lie excluded from his face,  
The Righteous of the world, who knew not of his grace  
And law, while living—now will triumph in his name,  
And with their loud Amen will join the glad acclaim.  
Then He who knoweth all, yet purposing to show  
His goodness, will demand from whence these voices grow.  
The ministering angels then will answer and will say,  
The while they veil for awe their faces—'These are they  
Who did not know thy law while living, and for this  
They lie in hell remote from glory and from bliss ;  
They cry Amen from thence.'—But He will of his grace  
Compassion take on them and on their mournful case,  
Will give the golden key from heaven's crystal floors,  
Which opens with a touch hell's forty thousand doors,

And Michael, mighty prince, will fly with it amain,  
On mercy's errand swift, and all the angelic train.  
Hell's forty thousand gates will open at his word,  
Its narrow chambers deep with expectation stirred.  
And as a man draws up his neighbour from a pit,  
When he shall have therein through evil hap alit,  
The prisoners he will draw from dungeons where they lay,  
And extricating lift from the deep and miry clay,—  
Will wash and cleanse their wounds where they have  
    plaguëd been,  
And clothe in garments white, and beautiful and clean ;  
And taking by the hand, will lead them to the gate  
Of Paradise, where they must for a moment wait ;  
Till there with leave brought in, they fall upon their face,  
And worship God, and praise and magnify his grace :  
While all that had before their places round the throne,  
Will give new thanks for this new mercy He has shown,  
And by new voices swelled, and higher and more strong,  
Ring through the vaults of heaven the full concert of song.

*PRAYER.*

WHEN prayer delights thee least, then learn to say,  
Soul, now is greatest need that thou should'st pray.

Crookëd and warped I am, and I would fain  
Straighten myself by thy right line again.

Oh come, warm sun, and ripen my late fruits ;  
Pierce, genial showers, down to my parchëd roots.

My well is bitter ; cast therein the tree,  
That sweet henceforth its brackish waves may be.

Say what is prayer, when it is prayer indeed ?  
The mighty utterance of a mighty need.

The man is praying, who doth press with might  
Out of his darkness into God's own light.

White heat the iron in the furnace won ;  
Withdrawn from thence, 'tis cold and hard anon.

Flowers from their stalks divided, presently  
Droop, fail, and wither in the gazer's eye.

The greenest leaf divided from its stem  
To speedy withering doth itself condemn.

The largest river from its fountain head  
Cut off, leaves soon a parched and dusty bed.

All things that live from God their sustenance wait,  
And sun and moon are beggars at his gate.

All skirts extended of thy mantle hold,  
When angel-hands from heaven are scattering gold

*THE FALCON'S REWARD.*

BENEATH the fiery cope of middle day  
The youthful Prince, his train left all behind,  
With eager eye gazed round him every way,  
If springing well he anywhere might find.

His favourite falcon, from long æry flight  
Returning, and from quarry struck at last,  
Told of the chase, which with its keen delight  
Had thus allured him on so far and fast,—

Till gladly he had welcomed in his drought  
The dullest pool that gathered in the rain :  
But such, or fount of clearer lymph, he sought  
Long through that blasted barren waste in vain.

What pleasure when, slow stealing o'er a rock,  
He spied the glittering of a little rill,  
Which yet, as if his burning thirst to mock,  
Did its scant treasures drop by drop distil.

A golden goblet from his saddle-bow  
He loosed, and from his steed alighted down,  
To wait until that fountain, trickling slow,  
Should in the end his golden goblet crown.

When set beside the promise of that draught  
How poor had seemed to him the costliest wine,  
That with its beaded bubbles winked and laughed,—  
When set beside that nectar more divine.

The brimming vessel to his lips at last  
He raised,—when, lo ! the falcon on his hand,  
With beak and pinion's sudden impulse, cast  
That cup's rare treasure all upon the sand.

Long was it ere the fountain, pulsing slow,  
Caused once again that chalice to run o'er ;  
When thinking no like hindrance now to know,  
He raised it to his parched lips once more :

Once more, as if to cross his purpose bent,  
The watchful bird,—as if on this one thing,  
That drink he should not of that stream, intent,—  
Struck from his hand the cup with forceful wing.

But when this new defeat his purpose found,  
Swift penalty this time the bird must pay ;  
Hurled down with angry strength upon the ground,  
Before her master's feet in death she lay :

And he, twice baffled, did meanwhile again  
From that scant rill to slake his thirst prepare ;  
When, down the crags descending, of his train  
One cried, ' O monarch, for thy life forbear !

' Coiled in these waters at their fountain head,  
And causing them so feebly to distil,  
A poisonous snake of hugest growth lies dead,  
And doth with venom all the streamlet fill.'

Dropped from his hand the cup ;—one look he cast  
Upon the faithful creature at his feet ;  
Whose dying struggles now were almost past,  
For whom a better guerdon had been meet ;

Then homeward rode in silence many a mile :—  
But if such thoughts did in his bosom grow,  
As did in mine the painfulness beguile  
Of that his falcon's end, what man can know ?

I said—' Such chalices the world fills up  
For us, and bright and without bale they seem—  
A sparkling potion in a jewelled cup,  
Nor know we drawn from what infected stream.

' Our spirit's thirst they promise to assuage,  
And we those cups unto our death had quaffed,  
If Heaven did not in dearest love engage  
To dash the chalice down, and mar the draught.

' Alas for us, if we that love are fain  
With wrath and blind impatience to repay,  
Which nothing but our weakness doth restrain,—  
As he repaid his faithful bird that day ;

' If an indignant glance we lift above,  
To lose some sparkling goblet discontent,  
Which, but for that keen watchfulness of love,  
Swift circling poison through our veins had sent.'

*THE CONVERSION OF ABRAHAM.*

FOND heart, when learnest thou to say,  
I love not pomps that fade away,  
Nor glories that decay and wane,  
Nor lights that rise to set again?  
When wilt thou turn where Abraham turned,  
And learn the lesson Abraham learned?  
Beyond the river while he dwelt,  
He with his kin to idols knelt,  
And nightly gazing on the sky,  
Worshipped the starry host on high.  
But when he saw their splendours fail,  
And that bright multitude grow pale,  
He left them, and adored the moon;  
But she too wanly wanëd soon.  
Baffled, he knelt unto the sun;  
But when *his* race of light was done,  
He cried, 'To such no vows I bring,  
I worship not the perishing!'  
And turned him to the God whose hand  
Made sun, and moon, and starry band—  
An everlasting Light, in whom  
Decrease and shadow find no room.



*THE TRUE PILGRIM.*

‘MY son,’—’twas thus upon his dying bed  
To his sole heir the agèd monarch said,—  
‘He who on every Moslem did impose,  
That once at least before his life should close,  
To Mecca he should wend his faithful way,  
And in the mother city kneel and pray,  
By shadows such as these did understand  
The earnest seeking of a better land,  
And a more real pilgrimage intend—  
Even that which draws for me unto its end.  
When thou then on this errand just art bent,  
Let not thy labour all be vainly spent,  
As vain the toil of many will be found,  
Though duly they have paced the holy ground,  
Circling the sacred shrine in many a ring,  
And duly drunk of Zemsem’s holy spring,  
And kissed that stone, which, white in heaven as snow,  
Doth now coal-black through breath of sinners show ;  
And all the weary desert way have made,  
Pacing a-foot, in meanest garb arrayed,  
Leaving no tittle unfulfilled of all  
Which to a perfect pilgrim should befall.  
Oh, many will have known the toil, the pain,  
Who yet will miss that journey’s truest gain ;  
For ’tis not merely that thou turn thy face  
Towärd the Caaba and the holy place,  
Unless as well thou dost in spirit fare  
Towärd New Zion, and art journeying there.  
Vainly whole heaps of pebbles wilt thou bring,  
And at a fancied aëry devil fling,  
Casting thy stone upon the very field,  
Where Abraham’s faith the tempter once repelled,

If all the while thou shunnest to molest  
A truer devil, lurking in thy breast.  
And what will profit to have laid aside  
Thy gorgeous robes and outward signs of pride,  
Taking in mean attire thy pilgrim way,  
If pride be still thine inmost soul's array?  
Oh ! let humility thy garment be,  
Which never suffer to be drawn from thee,  
Although a Chosroes' mantle in its stead  
By Fortune's hand to thee were offer'd.  
Thou ridest ; yet remember not the less  
That many pace a-foot the wilderness :  
Fare gently for their sakes ; or if perchance,  
Vigorous and strong, on foot thou dost advance,  
Bethink thee still that with the caravan  
Is many a child, and many an aged man.

‘ O pilgrim, to the holy city bound,  
Learn other dangers on thy pathway found.  
To right or left if sounds thine ear invade,  
Like trappings of a mighty cavalcade,  
Or voice by night which names thee by thy name  
As though from some familiar friend it came,  
Bidding thee turn a little from thy way,  
Or tarry, do not for thy life obey ;  
But close thine ears, and ever onward haste,  
Eluding so the demons of the waste.  
Or if in fiery noon, when throat is dry,  
And limbs are faint, far off thou dost espy  
What seems to thee some broad transparent lake,  
Delighting in its lucid breast to take  
White clouds, far mountains, and inverted trees,  
Do not forsake thy company for these :  
'Tis but the floating heat of middle noon,  
From sand-flats drawn, and which will vanish soon :

Oh woe ! if thee it shall have lured away,  
To flatter first, and afterwards betray.  
My son, whom I can watch for now no more,  
Grave deeply in thine heart this pilgrim lore ;  
About thy neck a father's precepts bind ;  
On, on, and leave these perils far behind.'

*AN EASTERN VERSION OF THE PARABLE  
OF THE TALENTS.*

THERE went a man from home : and to his neighbours twain

He gave, to keep for him, two sacks of golden grain.  
Deep in his cellar one the precious charge concealed ;  
And forth the other went and strewed it in his field.  
The man returns at last—asks of the first his sack :  
' Here, take it ; 'tis the same ; thou hast it safely back.'  
Unharm'd it shows without, but when he would explore  
His sack's recesses, corn there finds he now no more :  
One half of all therein proves rotten and decayed,  
Upon the other half have worm and mildew preyed.  
The putrid heap to him in ire he doth return ;  
And of the other asks, ' Where is my sack of corn ?'  
Who answered, ' Come with me, behold how it has sped,'  
And took and showed him fields with waving harvests spread.

Then cheerfully the man laughed out and cried, ' This one  
Had insight, to make up for the other that had none ;  
The letter *he* observed, but thou the precept's sense,  
And thus to thee and me shall profit grow from hence.  
In harvest thou shalt fill two sacks of corn for me,  
The residue of right remains in full for thee.'

*THE VASE OF HONEY.*

FAIR vessel hast thou seen with honey filled,  
Which is no sooner opened, than descend  
Upon the clammy sweets by bees distilled  
A troop of flies, quick swarming without end?

Yet these when one doth fan away and beat,  
Such as had lighted with a fearful care  
On the jar's edge, nor cumbered wings and feet,  
Lightly they mount into the upper air.

But all that headlong plunged those sweets among,  
They cannot fly, in cloying sweetness bound ;  
The heavy toils have all around them clung,  
In woful surfeitings their lives are drowned.

Such vessel is this world—fanned evermore  
By death's dark Angel with his mighty wing ;  
Then all that had in pleasure's honied store  
Their spirits sunk, they upward cannot spring.

Only they mount, who on this vessel's side  
With heed alighting, had with extreme lip  
Just ventured, there while suffered to abide,  
Its sweets in measure and with fear to sip.

*EASTERN MORALITIES.*

‘**W**HO truly strives?’ they asked. Then one replied :  
‘ The man that owns no other goal beside  
The throne of God, and till he there arrives,  
Allows himself no rest, he truly strives.’

Honour each thing for that it once may be,  
In bud the rose, in egg the eagle see ;  
Bright butterfly behold in ugly worm,  
Nor doubt that man enfolds an angel form.

My friends exclaimed, who saw me bowed with woe :  
‘ Be of good cheer ; the world is ebb and flow.’  
‘ To the dead fish what helps it,’ I replied,  
‘ That back returns the free and flowing tide?’

A pebble, thrown into the mighty sea,  
Sinks, and disturbs not its tranquillity :  
No ocean, but a shallow pool, the man,  
Whom every little wrong disquiet can.

A monk that once did at a king’s board feed,  
Ate less than was his wont and was his need :  
And the meal done, when he a grace should say,  
Prayed more and longer than he used to pray.  
O friend, if great things may in small be found,  
Quite other road than heavenward thou art bound.

He is a friend, who treated as a foe,  
Now even more friendly than before doth show ;

Who to his brother still remains a shield,  
Although a sword for him his brother wield ;  
Who of the very stones against him cast  
Builds friendship's altar higher and more fast.

With needle's point more easily you will  
Uproot and quite unfasten a huge hill,  
Than from the bosom you will dig up pride ;  
And the ant's footfall sooner is descried,  
On black earth moving, in the blackest night,  
Than are pride's subtle movements brought to light.

When men exalt thee with their flatteries,  
Occasion take thine own self to despise ;  
And as a help to this, the meanest thing  
Which thou hast ever done to memory bring.  
Think, too, that now thou dost in peril fall  
Of doing a yet meaner thing than all,  
If, being what thou art in thine own sight,  
Thou dost this praise appropriate as thy right.

The business of the world is child's play mere ;  
Too many, ah ! the children playing here :  
Their pleasure and their woe, their loss and gain,  
Alike mean nothing, and alike are vain—  
As children's, who, to pass the time away,  
Build up their booths, and buy and sell in play ;  
But homeward hungering must at eve repair,  
And standing leave their booths with all their ware :  
So the world's children, when their night is come,  
With empty satchels turn them sadly home.

Renounce the world, that thou its lord may'st be ;  
Become a servant, to be truly free.  
O arrow, yield thee to thy Monarch's bow,  
That whither He would send thee thou may'st go.

O camel, kneel, and freely take thy load ;  
And freely bear it, needing not the goad.  
For thy Belovéd be a light-toned flute,  
That to his slightest breath is never mute.  
In the mine hide not, when God seeks for thee,  
Rude ore, that stamped, his money thou may'st be.

Sage, who would'st maker of thine own god be,  
When made, alas ! what will he profit thee ?  
Most like art thou to children, that astride  
On reeds or wooden horses proudly ride ;  
And as they trail them on the ground, they cry,  
' This is the lightning, and its Lord am I !'  
Yet, while they deem their horses them upbear,  
Themselves the bearers of their horses are ;  
And when they grow weary of their course,  
They find no strength in these, no help, no force.  
How otherwise they fare, how fresh, how strong,  
Not of themselves, but borne of God along !  
How jubilant to Him they lift their head,  
Till the ninth heaven shakes underneath their tread !

True knowledge is the waking up of powers  
To conscious life, which were already ours.  
What now is mine in leaf and flower and fruit,  
That I possessed before in bud and root.  
The faded writing of the mind again  
By chymic art comes forth distinct and plain.  
Springs that were stopt, when that is cleared away  
That choked them, bubble in the open day.  
The stars appear at eve ; which yet have been  
All day in heaven, although till now unseen.  
The dawn lights up the landscape ; the great sun  
Shows, but not makes, the world he looks upon.  
I found a rich pearl flung upon my coast,  
Which yet no other but myself had lost.

I entered a large hall ; no foreign dome,  
But even my own long-left forgotten home ;  
And in what seemed at first a stranger face  
A former friend I daily learn to trace.

Who that might watch the moon in heaven, would look  
At her weak image in the water-brook ?  
Who were content, that might in presence stand  
Of one beloved, with letters from his hand ?  
When thou hast learned the name, hast thou the thing ?  
What life to thee will definitions bring ?  
Will the four letters, R, O, S, and E,  
The rose's hues and fragrance bring to thee ?  
Feed not on husks, but these strip off, and feed  
On the rich kernel, which is food indeed.  
Say, who of choice would wash in arid sand,  
While limpid streams were bubbling close at hand ?  
Bare Science is dry sand ;—thy spirit's wings  
Bathe thou in Love's delicious water-springs.  
Be thou the bee, which ever to its cell  
Not wax alone, but honey brings as well :  
Good is the wax for light, but better still  
What will thine hive with stor'd sweetness fill.

His splendid pilgrimage to Mecca done,  
Within the temple great Almansur's son  
Showered with a bounty prodigal and proud  
Enormous gifts among the struggling crowd ;  
And every day those gifts he multiplied,  
Vexed every day and humbled in his pride,  
That one who seemed the poorest pilgrim there,  
Remained aloof with calm abstracted air  
Indifferent, and contended not nor prest,  
To share his lavish largess with the rest.  
Until at last, when he had shed in vain  
Gold, jewels, pearls, he could no more refrain,



But cried to him, 'And dost thou nought desire,  
And wilt thou nothing at my hands require ?'  
Who answered, standing where before he stood :  
'Great shame it were for me, if any good,  
While thus a suppliant in God's house I stand,  
I asked or looked for, saving at his hand.'

Man, the caged bird that owned a higher nest,  
Is here awhile detained, reluctant guest ;  
Plumage and beak he shatters in his rage,  
And with his prison doth vain war engage ;  
For him the falcon watches, and his snare  
The bloody fowler doth for him prepare.  
Exiled from home, he here must sadly sing,  
In spring lack autumn, and in autumn spring.  
Far from his nest, he shivers on a wall,  
Where blows on him of rude misfortune fall—  
His head with weight of misery sore bowed down,  
His pinion clogged with dust, his courage gone.  
Then from his nest in heaven is heard a cry,  
And straight he spreads his wings divine on high :  
Lift him, O Lord, unto the lotus-tree,  
No meaner pitch may with his birth agree ;  
Grant him a pinion of such lofty flight,  
That he may on the lotus-tree alight :  
In thy bright palaces his nest prepare ;  
O happy, happy bird that nesteth there !

Sate in his presence-chamber Solomon ;  
When thither of his princes entered one,  
Haste in his step, and terror in his eye,  
And cried, 'O King, defend me, or I die ;  
Even now I saw with visage dark and fell  
Gaze on me the Death-angel Azraël.'  
To him the King : 'What help may I afford ?'  
'Oh bid the storm-wind, gracious mighty lord,

That it to farthest India waft me straight ;  
And there my life shall reach a longer date.'  
To farthest Ind at Solomon's command  
The storm-wind swept him over sea and land.  
But when the Spirits met another day,  
To the Death-angel spake the Monarch : ' Say,  
Why did thy terrors that poor man affright,  
Till he for anguish well nigh died outright,  
That poor man, whom I sheltered with my might ?'  
Then he : ' I meant not dreadful to appear,  
But only wondered to behold him here ;  
For God had bid me on that very day  
From farthest Ind to fetch his soul away.  
I thought, Were thousand pinions given to thee,  
To-day in India thou shouldst never be ;  
Nor guessed how this should be fulfilled, till there  
Thy word did waft him, answering to his prayer.'

A hen, though such tame creatures mostly are,  
Yet once received a water-bird in care ;  
Its mother-instinct drew the fledgling still  
To the wide ocean-floods, to roam at will ;  
Its timid nurse, upon the other hand,  
Sought evermore to lead it back to land.  
O man ! thy mother, Heaven, thy nurse is Earth,  
And thou of both wert nurtured from thy birth ;  
From thy true mother comes thine impulse free  
To launch forth boldly upon being's sea ;  
While aye thy nurse fears for thee, and would fain  
Thee to a narrow strip of dry restrain.  
Up, and remember Adam's kingly worth,  
How angels danced before him at his birth,  
How unto him they rendered homage all,  
And served him at the glorious festival,  
The bridal of two worlds, that kissed and met  
The morn when he in Paradise was set.

Up, man, for what if thou with beasts hast part,  
Since in the body framed of dust thou art,  
Yet know thyself upon the other side  
Greater than angels, and to God allied.  
But ah ! I sound this high alarum in vain,  
Sunk on thy bosom doth thy head remain :  
In lists of love while noblest bosoms bleed,  
That flies not vex thee, this is all thine heed.  
Up, be a man at last ; with Abraham go  
From house and kindred forth, thy God to know :  
Fair shine the sun and moon and host of heaven,  
To eye of sense no fairer sight is given :  
Yet cry with him : ‘ These rise to set again ;  
I worship Him, a light that will not wane.’  
Into the wilderness with Moses hie,  
And hear that mighty word, ‘ The Lord am I.’  
Then hast thou won the place that is thine own,  
A sitter on the threshold of God’s throne.

POEMS WRITTEN DURING THE RUSSIAN  
WAR, 1854, 1855.

WHAT though yet the spirit slumbers  
That should clothe great acts in song,  
Stirring but in feeble numbers,  
Loosening but a stammering tongue ;

Still, as well my soul presages,  
Mightier voices soon will sound,  
Which shall ring through all the ages,  
While the nations listen round.

For even now the thoughts are waking,  
And the deeds are being done,  
Deeds and thoughts, the poet's making,  
Whence his solemn heart is won.

If Thermopylæ's three hundred,  
They who kept the pass so well,—  
If at them all time has wondered,  
As they fought, and as they fell,

With their deed of duty cast they  
Our six hundred in the shade,  
When at that same bidding passed they  
To their closing death-parade ?

Let them their due praise inherit,  
Those of weaker woman-kind,  
Who in times past owned a spirit,  
Which has left man's strength behind ;

Yet our hearts and hearts' devotion  
 Wait upon that noble train,  
 Who have crossed the distant ocean  
 For a fellowship with pain ;

Seeking, as men seek for riches,  
 Painful vigils by the bed  
 Where the maimed and dying stretches  
 Aching limbs beside the dead :

And for this great suffering nation  
 Sealed those fountains shall not prove,  
 Those old springs of inspiration,  
 Mighty death, and mightier love.

But meanwhile, the pauses filling,  
 Till that deeper soul be stirred,  
 Mother-land, thou wilt be willing  
 That some fainter notes be heard.

What if thou in bitter mourning  
 Dost beside the graves recline  
 Of thy lost and unreturning,  
 Yet no Rachel's grief is thine.

Stately grief, not wild and tameless,  
 Thine, the privileged to see  
 Gentle, simple, named and nameless,  
 Willing all to die for thee ;

Foremost names in thine old story,  
 Foremost in these death-rolls shown,  
 Heirs no more of others' glory,  
 But the makers of their own.

Thy great mother-heart is bleeding,  
 Torn and pierc'd through and through,  
 Post on heavy post succeeding,  
 Bearing each some anguish new.

Yet the right thy bosom strengthens,  
 Nought in thee of courage dies,  
 Though the long sad death-roll lengthens,  
 Ever lengthens in thine eyes.

These are gone ; thou nursest others  
 Of the same heroic breed,  
 Good as they, their spirits' brothers,  
 To their hazards to succeed.

Then, while this thy grief's proud fashion,  
 From all weakness far removed,  
 This thy steadfast solemn passion  
 By the graves of thy beloved,

Thou wilt let him pass unhidden,  
 Wilt perchance vouchsafe an ear,  
 Who too weakly and unbidden  
 Dares to sound their praises here ;

This slight tribute of his bringing  
 Thou wilt not in scorn put by ;  
 And wilt pardon one for singing,  
 While so many do and die.

*ALMA.*

THOUGH till now ungraced in story, scant although  
thy waters be,  
Alma, roll those waters proudly, proudly roll them to the  
sea.

Yesterday unnamed, unhonoured, but to wandering Tartar  
known,  
Now thou art a voice for ever, to the world's four corners  
blown.

In two nations' annals graven, thou art now a deathless  
name,  
And a star for ever shining in their firmament of fame.

Many a great and ancient river, crowned with city, tower,  
and shrine,  
Little streamlet, knows no magic, boasts no potency like  
thine ;

Cannot shed the light thou sheddest around many a living  
head,  
Cannot lend the light thou lendest to the memories of the  
dead.

Yea, nor all unsoothed their sorrow, who can, proudly  
mourning, say—  
When the first strong burst of anguish shall have wept  
itself away—

‘ He has past from us, the loved one ; but he sleeps with  
them that died  
By the Alma, at the winning of that terrible hillside.’

Yes, and in the days far onward, when we all are calm as  
those,  
Who beneath thy vines and willows on their hero-beds  
repose,

Thou on England's banners blazoned with the famous  
fields of old,  
Shalt, where other fields are winning, wave above the  
brave and bold :

And our sons unborn shall nerve them for some great  
deed to be done,  
By that twentieth of September, when the Alma's heights  
were won.

O thou river ! dear for ever to the gallant, to the free,  
Alma, roll thy waters proudly, proudly roll them to the sea.

### SONNET.

TOGETHER lay them in one common grave,  
These noble sons of England and of France,  
Who side by side did yesterday advance,  
And to their foes a dear example gave  
Of what a freeman's worth beyond a slave.  
Theirs was a noble fellowship in life,  
They breathed their lives out in one glorious strife ;  
Then let them lie, the brave beside the brave,  
And sleep with them, for evermore to cease,  
Sleep with the sleep which no awaking knows,  
The long contention of eight hundred years :  
While from their ashes the fair tree of peace  
Springs, under which two nations may repose  
In love which ancient discord more endears.



*AFTER THE BATTLE.*

WE crowned the hard-won heights at length,  
    Baptized in flame and fire ;  
We saw the foeman's sullen strength,  
    That grimly made retire ;

Saw close at hand, and then more far,  
    Beneath the battle smoke  
The ridges of his shattered war,  
    That broke and ever broke.

But one, an English household's pride,  
    Dear many ways to me,  
Who climbed that death-path by my side,  
    I sought, but could not see—

Last seen, what time our foremost rank  
    That iron tempest tore ;  
He touched, he scaled the rampart bank,  
    Seen then, and seen no more.

One friend to aid, I measured back  
    With him that pathway dread ;  
No fear to wander from our track,  
    Its waymarks English dead.

Light thickened ; but our search was crowned,  
    As we too well divined ;  
And after briefest quest we found  
    What we most feared to find.

His bosom with one death-shot riven,  
The warrior boy lay low ;  
His face was turned unto the heaven,  
His feet unto the foe.

As he had fall'n upon the plain,  
Inviolatè he lay ;  
No ruffian spoiler's hand profane  
Had touchèd that noble clay.

And precious things he still retained,  
Which by one distant hearth,  
Loved tokens of the loved, had gainèd  
A worth beyond all worth.

I treasurèd these for them who yet  
Knew not their mighty woe ;  
I softly sealèd his eyes, and set  
One kiss upon his brow.

A decent grave we scoopèd him, where  
Less thickly lay the dead,  
And decently composèd him there  
Within that narrow bed.

Oh theme for manhood's bitter tears,  
The beauty and the bloom  
Of less than twenty summer years  
Shut in that darksome tomb !

Of soldier sire the soldier son—  
Life's honourèd eventide  
One lives to close in England, one  
In maiden battle dièd ;

And they that should have been the mourned,  
The mourners' parts obtain :  
Such thoughts were ours, as we returned  
To earth its earth again.

Brief words we read of faith and prayer  
Beside that hasty grave ;  
Then turned away, and left him there,  
The gentle and the brave ;

I calling back with thankful heart,  
With thoughts to peace allied,  
Hours when we two had knelt apart  
Upon the lone hill-side :

And, comforted, I praised the grace,  
Which him had led to be  
An early seeker of that Face,  
Which he should early see.

### SONNET.

FROM what of passion and of earthly pride,  
Presumptuous confidence and glory vain,  
Will cleave to justest cause which men sustain,  
Till Thou their cause and them hast purified,  
From what too much of these Thou hast espied  
In us, oh ! cleanse us from this dangerous leaven,  
At any cost, oh ! purge us, righteous Heaven,  
Though we herein be sorely searched and tried.  
So, purified from these, may we fulfil,  
Upon thy strength relying, not our own,  
The dreadful sentence of thy righteous will ;  
And this by us unto the nations shown,  
May burn no incense to our drag, but still  
All honour give to Thee, and Thee alone.

## BALAKLAVA.

MANY a deed of faithful daring may obtain no record  
here,  
Wrought where none could see or note it, save the one  
Almighty Seer.

Many a deed, awhile remembered, out of memory needs  
must fall,  
Covered, as the years roll onward, by oblivion's creeping  
pall :

But there are which never, never, to oblivion can give  
room,  
Till in flame earth's records perish, till the thunderpeal  
of doom :

And of these through all the ages married to immortal  
fame,  
One is linked, and linked for ever, Balaklava, with thy  
name ;

With thine armies three that wond'ring stood at gaze and  
held their breath,  
With thy fatal lists of honour, and thy tournament of  
death.

O our brothers that are sleeping, weary with your great  
day's strife,  
On that bleak Crimean headland, noble prodigals of life,

Eyes which ne'er beheld you living, these have dearly  
mourned you dead,  
All your squandered wealth of valour, all the lavish blood  
ye shed.

And in our eyes tears are springing ; but we bid them  
back again ;

None shall say, to see us weeping, that we hold your  
offering vain ;

That for nothing, in our sentence, did that holocaust arise,  
With a battle-field for altar, and with you for sacrifice.

Not for nought ; to more than warriors armed as you for  
mortal fray,

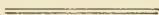
Unto each that in life's battle waits his Captain's word ye  
say—

‘ What by duty's voice is bidden, there where duty's star  
may guide,

Thither follow, that accomplish, whatsoever else betide.’

This ye taught ; and this your lesson solemnly in blood  
ye sealed :

Heroes, martyrs, are the harvest Balaklava's heights shall  
yield.



YES, let us own it in confession free,  
That when we girt ourselves to quell the wrong,  
We deemed it not so giant-like and strong,  
But it with our slight effort thought to see  
Pushed from its base ; yea, almost deemed that we,  
Champions of right, might be excused the price  
Of pain, and loss, and large self-sacrifice,  
Set ever on high things by Heav'n's decree.  
What if this work's great hardness was concealed  
From us, until so far upon our way  
That no escape remained us, no retreat,—  
Lest, being at an earlier hour revealed,  
We might have shrunk too weakly from the heat,  
And shunned the burden of this fiery day ?

'H TAN, 'H 'ΕΠΙ TAN.

' *T*<sup>HIS</sup>, or on *this* ;—Bring home with thee this shield,  
Or be thou, dead, upon this shield brought home'—  
So spake the Spartan mother to her son  
Whom her own hands had armed. Oh strong of heart !  
And famed through all the ages for that word !  
Yet know I of a fairer strength than hers—  
Strength linked with weakness, steeped in tears and fears,  
And tenderness of trembling womanhood ;  
But true as hers to duty's perfect law.

And such is theirs, who in our England now,  
Wives, sisters, mothers, watch by day, by night,  
In many a cottage, many a stately hall,  
For those dread posts, too slow, too swift, that haste  
O'er land and sea, the messengers of doom ;  
Theirs, who ten thousand times would rather hear  
Of loved forms stretched upon the bloody sod,  
All cold and stark, but with the debt they owed  
To that dear land that bore them duly paid,  
Than look to enfold them in strict arms again,  
By aught in honour's or in peril's path  
Unduly shunned, for that embrace reserved.

*INKERMAN.*

SUNDAY, NOV. 5, 1854

CHEERLY with us that dread November morn  
Rose, as I trace its features in my mind ;  
A day that in the lap of winter born,  
Yet told of autumn scarcely left behind.

And we by many a hearth in all the land,  
Whom quiet sleep had lapped the calm night through,  
Changed greetings, lip with lip, and hand to hand,  
Old greetings, but which love makes ever new.

Then, as the day brought with it sweet release  
From this world's care, with timely feet we trod  
The customary paths of blessed peace ;  
We worshipped in the temples of our God ;

And when the sun had travelled his brief arc,  
Drew round our hearths again in thankful ease :  
With pleasant light we chased away the dark,  
We sat at eve with children round our knees.

So fared this day with us :—but how with you ?  
What, gallant hosts of England, was your cheer,  
Who numbered hearts as gentle and as true  
As any kneeling at our altars here ?

From cheerless watches on the cold dank ground  
Startled, ye felt a foe on every side ;  
With mist and gloom and deaths encompassed round,  
With even to perish in the light denied.

And that same season of our genial ease,  
It was your very agony of strife ;  
While each of those our golden moments sees  
With you the ebbing of some noble life.

'Mid dark ravines, by precipices vast,  
Did there and here your dreadful conflict sway :  
No Sabbath day's light work to quell at last  
The fearful odds of that unequal fray.

Oh 'hope' of England, only not 'forlorn,'  
Because ye never your own hope resigned,  
But in worst case, beleaguered, overborne,  
Did help in God and in your own selves find ;

We greet you o'er the waves, as from this time  
Men, to the meanest and the least of whom,  
In reverence of fortitude sublime,  
We would rise up, and yield respectful room :

We greet you o'er the waves, nor doubt to say,  
Our Sabbath setting side by side with yours,  
Yours was the better and the nobler day,  
And days like it have made that ours endures.



*THE UNFORGOTTEN.*

WHOM for thy race of heroes wilt thou own,  
And, England, who shall be thy joy, thy pride?  
As thou art just, oh then not those alone  
Who nobly conquering lived, or conquering died.

Them also in thy roll of heroes write,  
For well they earned what best thou canst bestow,  
Who being girt and arm'd for the fight,  
Yielded their arms, but to no mortal foe.

Far off they pined on fever-stricken coast,  
Or sank in sudden arms of painful death ;  
And faces which their eyes desired the most,  
They saw not, as they drew their parting breath.

Sad doom, to know a mighty work in hand,  
Which shall from all the ages honour win ;  
Upon the threshold of this work to stand,  
Arrested there, while others enter in.

And this was theirs ; they saw their fellows bound  
To fields of fame which they might never share ;  
And all the while within their own hearts found  
A strength that was not less, to do and dare :

But knew that never, never with their peers,  
They should salute some grand day's glorious close,  
The shout of triumph ringing in their ears,  
The light of battle shining on their brows.

Sad doom ;—yet say not Heaven to them assigned  
A lot from all of glory quite estranged :  
Albeit the laurel which they hoped to bind  
About their brows for cypress wreath was changed.

Heaven gave to them a glory stern, austere,  
A glory of all earthly glory shorn ;  
With firm heart to accept fate's gift severe,  
Bravely to bear the thing that must be borne ;

To see such visions fade and turn to nought,  
And in this saddest issue to consent ;  
If only the great work were duly wrought,  
That others should accomplish it, content.

Then as thou wouldst thyself continue great,  
Keep a true eye for what is great indeed ;  
Nor know it only in its lofty state  
And victor's robes, but in its lowliest weed.

And now, and when this dreadful work is done,  
England, be these too thy delight and pride ;  
Wear them as near thy heart as any one  
Of all who conquering lived, or conquering died.

*ON THE BREAKING OFF OF THE CON-  
FERENCES AT VIENNA, JUNE, 1855.*

**H**EART of England, faltering never in the good time  
or the ill,  
But thy great day's task of duty strong and patient to  
fulfil ;

Men of England, constant ever, to your own plain instincts  
true,  
Praise the Giver of all good things for the gift He gave to  
you ;

Praise the Giver of all good things, praise the Giver of  
the best,  
Of a firm heart firmly beating in a strong resolvèd breast.

Praise Him that, when others faltered, ye continued at one  
stay,  
Praise Him that the hour of weakness has for ever passed  
away.

To her cancelled scroll of greatness none shall now set  
England's name ;  
What she sowed in tears and anguish she shall never  
reap in shame.

Lift your heads up, O ye weepers ; from the dust your-  
selves arouse ;  
Chase away the double sadness that was gathering on  
your brows.

Lift your heads up, O ye weepers ; those that were your  
joy and pride,  
Those whom you must weep for ever, not for nothing  
shall have died.

If the crown of all your gladness has been stricken from  
your head,  
If, discrowned, ye mourn in ashes for your unreturning  
dead,

Not to purchase shameful baffling at a higher dearer rate  
Than our fathers purchased honour, were your homes  
made desolate.

For oh ! hearken ye, and hearken, all who still retain  
delight  
In the old land's fiery valour, in the victories of right ;

List, oh ! list, what tales of triumph flash the magic wires  
along,  
Long delayed, now each on other in a swift succession  
throng.

First-fruits of a mightier harvest, preludes of a loftier  
strain,  
Pledges of a part well chosen, stir our hearts again, again ;

Till in his good time He give us, who has proved and  
purified,  
Who has shamed our shallow boasting, who has tamed  
our guilty pride,

Till He give us, when the giving shall not lift us up nor  
spoil,  
All we sought, the ample guerdon of a nation's tears and  
toil.

TO ———

IN huts and palaces are mourners found,  
As on the far-off fields of death in turn  
Leap the dread lots from fortune's fatal urn :  
And those not yet in cords of sorrow bound,  
But listening everywhere the doleful sound  
Of others' griefs, still ask, Who next shall mourn,  
Of brother, son, or dearer yet forlorn ?  
To whom shall next the cup of pain go round ?  
We know not ; if anon to thee and me,  
Let not our hearts then chide us that we heard  
Of pangs, which other souls did search and try,  
To this their anguish yielding, it might be,  
The trivial offering of a passing sigh,  
While all our deeper heart remained unstirred.

*THE RETURN OF THE GUARDS.*

JULY, 1856.

TWO years—an age of glory and of pain !—  
Since we with blessings and with shouts and tears,  
And with high hopes pursued your parting train,  
With everything but fears.

Forth from beside our hearths we saw you pass,  
And guessed that battle must be stern and strong  
War's shapes we saw,—but dimly, in a glass,—  
Its shapes of wrath and wrong.

We saw not, Heaven in mercy did not show,  
The fiery squadron rushing to its doom,  
An army in its winding-sheet of snow,  
Nor Varna's charnel tomb.

We saw not Scutari's heaped up agonies,  
Nor those blest hands and hearts that brought relief  
Splendours and glooms were hidden from our eyes,—  
What glory and what grief !

One thing we saw, one only thing we knew,  
Come what come might, ye would not bring to shame  
The loved land which had trusted thus to you  
Its wealth of ancient fame.

Therefore the old land greets you, whose renown  
In face of friend and foe ye well upbore,  
Handing the treasure of its glory down  
Not poorer than before.

And greets you first, as owing you the most,  
The Lady, whose transcendant diadem,  
Unless she ruled brave men, would cease to boast  
Its best and fairest gem.

But ah ! if through her bosom there is sent,  
Nor hers alone, a throb of piercing pain,  
With tearful memories of the brave who went,  
And come not now again,

Of all who made a holy land for aye,  
(Such consecration is in glorious graves)  
Of that bleak barren headland far away,  
Foamed round by Euxine waves ;

Yet shall this sadness presently depart,  
Leaving undimmed the splendour of this hour ;  
We rather thanking Heaven with grateful heart  
For their high gift and dower,

Who, ending well, have passed beyond the range  
Of our mutations ; whom no spot or stain  
Can now touch ever ; for whom chance and change  
Not any more remain.

Shout then, ye people ; let glad thoughts have way ;  
Shout, and in these their absent fellows greet,—  
Yea, all who shared with them, of that fierce day  
The burden and the heat.

Nor yet forget that when in coming time  
By many an English hearth shall men recall  
This two-years' chronicle of deeds sublime,  
Then first, perchance, of all,

They, talking of dread Inkerman, shall tell,  
When that wild storm of fight had passed away,  
How thick by those low mounds they kept so well  
The noble Bearskins lay.

## ELEGIAC POEMS.

‘ Love that hath its deep foundation set  
Under the grave of things.’

*TO* ———

I THOUGHT at first these records should belong  
To few save thee ; nor meant that many eyes  
Should see unfolded thus without disguise  
These mysteries of grief in mournful song ;  
Yet might it unto love appear a wrong,  
Aught to keep back, that would perchance impart  
Some portion to another wounded heart  
Of what these lent to thine of comfort strong ?  
Then let it be,—enduring for their sake,  
Hearts which are bleeding now, or once have bled,  
And that from hence some solace slight may take,  
That others, of such grief untouched, should say  
That here what better had been cover'd,  
Is bared unto the garish eye of day.



---

WHAT, many times I musing asked, is man,  
If grief and care  
Keep far from him? he knows not what he can,  
What cannot bear.

He, till the fire hath proved him, doth remain  
The main part dross :  
To lack the loving discipline of pain  
Were endless loss.

Yet when my Lord did ask me on what side  
I were content  
The grief, whereby I must be purified,  
To me were sent,

As each imagined anguish did appear,  
Each withering bliss,  
Before my soul, I cried, 'Oh ! spare me here,  
Oh no, not this !—'

Like one that having need of, deep within,  
The surgeon's knife,  
Would hardly bear that it should graze the skin,  
Though for his life.

Till He at last, who best doth understand  
Both what we need,  
And what can bear, did take my case in hand,  
Nor crying heed.

*TO M——*

DEAR girl, that clingest to my side  
So closely in thy tears,  
As overawed and terrified  
By some mysterious fears ;

Thine own great loss, thy parents' woe,  
Thou dimly dost divine,  
And weepest ; yet thou dost not know  
What cause to weep is thine.

Sad art thou and disconsolate,  
That he is gone away,  
The youthful friend, the joyful mate  
Of childhood's happy day ;

That he who sported on life's shore,  
And culled bright shells with thee  
And beauteous plants, will sport no more  
By that fair-seeming sea.

But I am shedding other tears  
For thee, my gentle child—  
Far looking o'er the surge of years  
So gloomy, dark, and wild :

Gone is he, who amid that strife  
Would with an arm more strong  
For thee have cleft the waves of life,  
And shielded from its wrong.

That holy thing—a brother's love—  
Thine is it still to claim ;  
Oh ! ever be it thine to prove  
What means that holy name.

But over him vain watch we keep,  
Our first—thine elder—born ;  
And all of us have cause more deep  
Than yet we know, to mourn.

---

JANUARY 16th, 1841.

NO mother's eye beside thee wakes to-night,  
No taper burns beside thy lonely bed ;  
Darkling thou liest, hidden out of sight,  
And none are near thee but the silent dead.

How cheerly glows this hearth, yet glows in vain,  
For we uncheered beside it sit alone,  
And listen to the wild and beating rain  
In angry gusts against our casement blown :

And though we nothing speak, yet well I know  
That both our hearts are there, where thou dost keep  
Within thy narrow chamber far below,  
For the first time unwatched, thy lonely sleep :

Oh no, not thou !—and we our faith deny,  
This thought allowing :—thou, removed from harms,  
In Abraham's bosom dost securely lie,  
Oh ! not in Abraham's, in a Saviour's arms—

In that dear Lord's, who in thy worst distress,  
 Thy bitterest anguish, gave thee, dearest child,  
 Still to abide in perfect gentleness,  
 And like an angel to be meek and mild.

Sweet corn of wheat, committed to the ground  
 To die, and live, and bear more precious ear,  
 Since in the heart of earth thy Saviour found  
 His place of rest, for thee we will not fear.

Sleep softly, till that blessèd rain and dew,  
 Down lighting upon earth, such change shall bring,  
 That all its fields of death shall laugh anew,  
 Yea, with a living harvest laugh and sing.

### MORAVIAN HYMN.

[SLIGHTLY ALTERED.]

WHERE is this infant? it is gone—  
 To whom? to Christ, its Saviour true.  
 What does He for it? He goes on  
 As He has ever done, to do—  
 He blesses, He embraces without end,  
 And to all children proves the tenderest friend.

He loves to have the little ones  
 Upon his lap quite close and near ;  
 And thus their glass so swiftly runs,  
 And they so little while are here ;  
 He gave—He takes them when He thinks it best  
 For them to come to Him and find their rest.

However 'tis a great delight

Awhile to see such little princes,  
All drest in linen fine and white,

A beauty which escapes the senses :  
The pure Lamb dwells in them—his majesty  
Makes their sweet eyes to sparkle gloriously.

Be therefore thanked, Thou dearest Lamb,

That we this precious child have seen,  
And that thy blood and Jesu's name,

To it a glittering robe have been :  
We thank Thee too that Thou hast brought it home,  
That it so soon all dangers hath o'ercome.

Dear child, so live thou happily

In Christ, who was thy faith's beginner,  
Rejoice in Him eternally

With each redeemed and happy sinner ;  
We bury thee in hope—the Lamb once slain  
Will raise, and we shall see thee yet again.

---

WHAT was thy life? a pearl cast up awhile  
Upon the bank and shoal of time ;—again,  
Even as it did the gazer's eyes beguile,  
Drawn backward by the ever-hungering main.

What was thy life? a fountain of sweet wave,  
Which to the salt sea's margin all too near  
Rose sparkling, and a few steps scarcely gave,  
Ere *that* distained its waters fresh and clear.

What was thy life? a flowering almond-tree,  
Which all too soon its blossoms did unfold ;  
And so must see their lustre presently  
Dimmed, and their beauty nipped by envious cold.

What was thy life? a bright and beauteous flame,  
Wherein, a season, light and joy we found ;  
But a swift sound of rushing tempest came,  
It passed—and sparkless ashes strewed the ground.

What was thy life? a bird in infant's hand  
Held with too slight a grasp, and which, before  
He knows or fears, its pinions doth expand,  
And with a sudden impulse heavenward soar.

---

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I CANNOT tell what coming years  
May have, reserved, of grief for me ;  
I cannot tell what they may be,  
How wrung with anguish, dimmed with tears :

But scarcely can a sadder morn  
Than this upon mine eyelids break,  
When from a flattering dream I wake  
On a reality forlorn,

For never from thine ivory gate,  
O Sleep, a falser dream was sent  
Than unto me brief gladness lent,  
To leave me sorrow's trustier mate.

We wandered freely as of yore,  
And in my hand I felt the grasp  
Of that small hand, whose tender clasp  
I shall not feel, oh ! any more :

We wandered through the peopled towns,  
And where we came I heard men praise  
His gracious looks, his winning ways,—  
We wandered o'er the lonely downs ;

And ever held familiar talk  
As we passed onward, I and he  
Who was companion true to me  
At home, and in long woodland walk ;

Gone was the agony, the fear,  
And all the dreadful gulf between  
What we are now and what have been,  
The vault, the coffin, and the bier.

I start—and lo ! my dream is not :  
But though 'tis round me thickest gloom,  
Yet in the corner of the room  
I know there stands a vacant cot.

I close mine eyes ; I strive again  
To feed upon that poor delight ;  
The broken links to re-unite  
Once more of slumber's golden chain.

Lost effort !—Sleep, oh ! twice untrue,  
What need to bring that fond deceit ;  
And then, when I allow the cheat,  
To flee, while vainly I pursue ?



---

THIS chest, a homely cabinet, although  
It keeps no jewels won from toilsome mine,  
Nor rarest shells from ocean depths below  
Drawn with unfaded colours bright and fine,  
Nor doth not graven gems, nor vases show,  
Nor old medallions of some kingly line—  
Albeit no such treasures here there be,  
Yet guards it what is dearer far to me.

But wouldst thou know what treasures thus are dear,  
And over costliest things in worth prevail,—  
Some pebbles quaint, some broken toys appear,  
Some feathers from the peacock's starry tail,  
Some books, of those that children love, are here,  
An earthen lamp whose light has long grown pale,  
With gifts a kinsman from the Indian shore  
Brought o'er the sea,—these make up all the store.

But when that loved one left us on life's way,  
Whose that they were doth make these trifles aught,  
Things sacred they became, which still, as they  
Met our sad quest, or came to us unsought,  
Or as the other children in their play  
Found, and with awed and solemn aspect brought,  
We gathered one by one, and laid aside,—  
Dearer to us than golden treasures wide !

TO ———

WE did not quite believe this world would give  
To us what ne'er it had to any given,  
That round our bark eternal calms should live,  
That ours should ever be a stormless heaven :

Yet we, long season, were like men that dwell  
In safe abodes beside some perilous shore,  
Who when they hear the northern whirlwinds swell,  
Who when they hear the furious breakers roar,

Think, it may be, but with too slight a thought,  
On them that in the great deep labouring are,  
Where winds are fierce, and waves are madly wrought,—  
And lend them, it may be, a passing prayer.

Thus we, belovèd, in our safe recess  
Did evermore abroad the voices hear,  
In the wide world, of sorrow and distress,  
With pity heard, yet us they came not near :

Or if at times they might approach us nigh,  
And if at times we mourned, yet still remained  
Our inner world untouched—the sanctuary  
Of our blest home by sorrow unprofaned ;

When lo ! that cup which we had seen go round  
To one and to another, cup of pain,  
We of a sudden at our own lips found,  
And it was given us deep of that to drain ;

And what had seemed at first a little cloud  
On our clear sky, no broader than the hand,  
Did all its lights and constellations shroud,  
And gloomy wings from end to end expand.

O unforgotten day ! the earliest morn  
Of the new year, when friends are wont to meet,  
And while upon all faces joy is worn,  
Each doth the other with kind wishes greet,

O day, whose anguish never shall wax old,  
When we no longer might our fears deny,  
When our hearts' secret thoughts we dared unfold  
One to the other, that our child would die.

Oh ! freshly may in us the memory live  
Of the mere lie which then the world did seem,  
And all the world could promise or could give,—  
A breaking bubble ! a departing dream !

So while this lore doth in our hearts remain,  
We on the world shall lean not, that false reed,  
Not strong enough our burden to sustain,  
Yet sharp enough to pierce us till we bleed.

But now a pearl is from our chaplet dropt,  
But now a flower is from our garland riven,  
One singing fountain of our joy is stopt,  
One brightest star extinguished in our heaven ;

One only—yet oh ! who may guess the change  
That by that one has been among us wrought ?  
How all familiar things are waxen strange  
Or sad,—what silence to our house is brought ?

Or if the merry voices still arise,  
Now that the captain of the games is gone,  
We check them not, but still into our eyes  
The tears have started at that alien tone :

And we, perchance too confident of old,  
As though our blessings all were ours in fee,  
Those that remain now tremulously hold,  
From anxious perturbations never free ;

As though the spell were broken, and the charm  
Reversed, which shielded had our house so long,  
And we without defence to every harm  
Lay open, and exposed to every wrong.

Oh ! thought which should not be, oh ! faith too weak  
To tremble at the slightest ache or pain,  
At the least languor of the changeful cheek,  
With terrors hardly to be stilled again.

Yet thus we walk within our house, in grief  
For what has been, in fear for what may be,  
And still the advancing days bring no relief,  
But make us all our loss more plainly see ;

And when this pallid winding-sheet of snow,  
Which all this dreary time the earth has wound,  
Dissolves and disappears, as warm winds blow,  
And the hard soil relenting is unbound ;

And when that happy season shall arrive,  
To mourning hearts the saddest in its mirth,  
When all things in this living world revive  
Save the dear clod low-lying in the earth ;

We shall bethink us then with what delight  
He used to hail, himself discovering first,  
The purple or the yellow crocus bright,  
Or where the snowdrop from its sheath had burst.

Oh ! then shall I remember many a walk  
In shadowy woods, close hidden from the flames  
Of the fierce sun, and interspersed with talk  
Of ancient England's high heroic names ;

Or holier still, of them who lived and died,  
That Christ's dear lore to us they might hand down  
Untarnished, or his faith to spread more wide,  
Winning a martyr's palm and martyr's crown ;

Or how those tales he earnestly would crave  
Of old romance, our childhood's golden dower,  
Which in large measure willingly we gave,  
Feeding the pure imaginative power.

Oh days that never, never shall return !  
The future may be rich in genial good,  
We are not poor in hope, we do not mourn  
The wreck of all our bliss around us strewed ;

Oh no—fair flowrets blossom in our bowers,  
Rich pearls upon our chaplet still are given,  
And singing fountains of delight are ours,  
And stars of brightness in our earthly heaven.

Yet never can that golden time come back,  
When we could look around us with an eye  
Entirely satisfied, which did not lack  
*One* of the happy number standing by ;

When yet no edge as of encroaching dark  
Gave token that our moon began to wane,  
When the most curious eye had failed to mark  
Upon its clear bright surface speck or stain.

—Lo ! as that bird which all the wakeful night  
Leaning its bosom on a poignant thorn,  
So bleeds, and bleeding sings, and makes delight  
For some that listen, though its heart be torn ;

Thus in this night of grief I love to lean  
With wounded bosom, and so make my song,  
Upon the thorn of memories sharp and keen,  
Well pleasèd while I do myself this wrong.

And yet, belovèd, why should we lament  
That vanished time with passionate regret—  
Not rather marvelling at the rare consent  
Of blessings which so long above us met ?

Oh ! lot which could not aye endure, oh ! lot  
Which could not be for sinful men designed ;  
For we, not suffering, should have quite forgot  
To feel or suffer with our suffering kind :

Oh ! lot it was to waken liveliest fears,  
A lot which never have God's servants known ;—  
Yea, who amid a world of grief and tears  
In freedom from all pain would stand alone ?

And what though now we from this grief express  
But little save its bitter, yet be sure  
In this its mere unmingled bitterness  
It shall not, cannot evermore endure.

But comforts shall arise, like fountains sweet  
Fresh springing in a salt and dreary main,  
Fountains of sweetest wave, which shipmen meet  
In the waste ocean, an unlooked-for gain.

And as when some fair temple is o'erthrown  
By earthquake, or by hostile hand laid waste,  
At first it lies, stone rudely rent from stone,  
A confused ruinous heap, and all defaced ;

Yet visit that fall'n ruin by and bye,  
And what a hand of healing has been there ;  
How sweetly do the placid sunbeams lie  
On the green sward which all the place doth wear,

And what rich odours from the flowers are borne,  
From flowers and flowering weeds, which even within  
The rents and fissures of those walls forlorn  
Have made their home, yea, thence their sustenance  
win !

So time no less has gentle skill to heal,  
When our fair hopes have fall'n, our earth-built towers ;  
How busy wreck and ruin to conceal  
With a new overgrowth of leaves and flowers.

Nor time alone—a better hand is here,  
Where it has wounded, watching to upbind ;  
Which when it takes away in love severe,  
Still some austerer blessing leaves behind.

Oh ! higher gifts has brought this mournful time,  
Than all those years which did so smoothly run :  
For what if they, life's flower and golden prime,  
Had something served to knit our hearts in one ;

Yet doth that all seem little now, compared  
With our brief fellowship in tears and pain ;  
To share the things which we have newly shared,  
This makes a firmer bond, a holier chain :

To have together held that aching head,  
To have together heard that piteous moan,  
To have together knelt beside that bed,  
When life was flitting, and when life had flown—

And to have one of ours, whose ashes sleep  
Where the great church its solemn shadow flings ;  
Oh ! love has now its roots that stretch more deep,  
That strike and stretch beneath the grave of things.

Oh ! more than this, yet holier bonds there are,  
For we his spirit shall to ours feel nigh,  
And know he lives, whenever we in prayer  
Hold with heaven's saintly throng communion high.

Then wherefore more ?—or wherefore this to thee—  
A faithful suppliant at that inner shrine,  
At which who kneel, to them 'tis given to see  
How pain and grief and anguish are divine



---

H ERS was a mother's heart,  
That poor Egyptian's, when she drew apart,  
Because she would not see  
Her child beloved in his last agony :

When her sad load she laid  
In her despair beneath the scanty shade  
In the wild waste, and stept  
Aside, and long and passionately wept.

Yet higher, more sublime,  
How many a mother, since that ancient time,  
Has shown the mighty power  
Of love divine in such another hour !

Oh ! higher love to wait  
Fast by the sufferer in his worst estate,  
Nor from the eyes to hide  
One pang, but aye in courage to abide.

And though no Angel bring  
In that dark hour unto a living spring  
Of gladness,—as was sent,  
Stilling her voice of turbulent lament,—

Oh ! higher faith to show,  
Out of what depths of anguish and of woe  
The heart is strong to raise  
To an all-loving Father hymns of praise.

TO ———

O FRIEND, high thanks I owe thee, not alone  
That when I did a stricken mourner stand  
Beside a grave, thou cheer'dst me with true tone,  
And the firm pressure of a faithful hand ;

It is not for this loving sympathy,  
But for a higher blessing thanks I owe,  
Thanks owe thee for a lesson plain yet high,  
Taught in thy darker hour of heavier woe.

Fain had I been to shrink with coward mind  
Not merely from an idle world's turmoil,  
But even from friendly greetings of my kind,  
Yea, quite to shun my life's appointed toil.

But when hereafter shall to me betide  
Sorrow or pain, oh, then not any more  
May I so seek to thrust my tasks aside ;  
Oh, then may I retain a nobler lore—

From common burdens no exemption ask,  
But in sustaining them best comfort find ;  
As knowing life has evermore a task  
Which must be done—with glad or sorrowing mind :

That pleasure as it came, even so departs,  
But duty, life's true star, doth fixed remain ;  
This lesson graven on my heart of hearts,  
This from thy converse is my latest gain.

---

YONDER on that wall displayed,  
Children three behold portrayed,  
The resemblances of life,  
With the truth of nature rife :  
See one gentle girl is there,  
And of boys a laughing pair ;  
And, by God's good grace, the three  
Round about our hearths we see,  
Filling still our home with glee.

But that loved one, who has left  
Us of so much joy bereft,  
Whom our yearning hearts require,  
Whom our aching eyes desire,  
We, alas ! have not of him  
Even this poor memorial dim.  
Oh unhappy chance ! the three  
Whom around us still we see,  
Whom at any hour we may--  
Every hour of every day--  
To our bosoms fold and press,  
Visions of delight that bless  
Daily our glad eyes, and still  
With their living voices fill  
Full of joyfulness our bowers,  
Triad sweet that still are ours ;  
We may on their portraits feed,  
In this richer than we need.  
But that loved one, loved and lost,  
Who has left our life's bleak coast,  
After whom our eyes we strain,  
Whom we listen for in vain,

For he comes, he comes not back,  
Well-a-day ! of him we lack  
Rudest effort that should trace  
The dear features of his face ;  
Which if it had truly caught,  
Though by artless limner wrought,  
It had still been in our eyes  
Dearer relic, costlier prize,  
Than great work of master's hand,  
By far-famed artist planned,  
Looking calmly from the wall  
Of some old ancestral hall.

And already, when I strive  
That lost image to revive,  
And his very self to paint  
On my mind's eye, dim and faint  
Come those features, indistinct,  
Or with that last suffering linked ;  
Or if they distinct and clear  
For a moment may appear,  
Soon they fade anew, and seem  
Like the picture of a dream,  
Or cloud-vision, which the breath  
Of the light wind scattereth.

Years will roll, and dim and dimmer,  
Through their mists, will faintly glimmer  
That loved image, which e'en now  
Comes not freely to my vow,  
Which already memory's wand  
Is not potent to command  
At its bidding.—Let it be,  
Let me lose all trace of thee,—  
Of the earthly casket, which  
Once a heavenly gem made rich,—

Of that shape which in my sight  
Glanced an apparition bright ;  
So that fresh in me I find  
The dear features of thy mind,  
So that these continue still,  
And the haunts of memory fill—  
Thy unerring keen delight  
In all lovely things and bright,  
And the largeness of thy heart,  
Ever planning to impart  
To thy brothers, to the poor,  
Far beyond thy little store,  
And thy tears which any woe,  
Heard or seen, would cause to flow—  
So that I do not forget  
What in thee so freely met,  
To thy Mother manly love—  
And thy years so far above,  
And beyond a childish mind,  
All the pleasure thou could'st find  
In whate'er I might design,  
In whatever tasks were mine—  
If I may remember still  
How our inborn stain of ill  
Did in thee break seldom forth,  
Seldom came unto the birth ;  
(So the holy waters laved,  
With their grace so truly saved ;)   
While with a delighted ear  
Of thy Lord and Saviour dear  
Thou didst ever love to hear ;  
If these memories with me stay,  
If these do not fade away,  
I with unrepining heart  
Will those other see depart.

*NO MORE.*

**H**EART'S brother, hast thou ever known  
What meaneth that No more?  
And all the bitterness outdrawn,  
Close hidden at its core?

Ah no—draw from it worlds of pain,  
And thou wilt surely find  
That in that word there doth remain  
A bitterer drop behind.

---

**M**EN will be light of heart and glad,  
When we are sad;  
Or if perchance our hearts are light,  
With them 'tis night.

Kind Nature, but 'tis never thus  
With thee and us:  
But thee in all our moods we find  
Unto our mind.

We laugh, and dance in all thy bowers  
The jocund flowers—  
We mourn, and every flower appears  
Bedropt with tears.

O Mother true, from ways of men  
To this far glen,  
Dear Mother, to thy breast I creep,  
And weep, and weep.

---

---

O HAPPY days, O months, O years,  
Which, even in this dim world of woe,  
'Tis now impossible can show  
The print of grief, the stain of tears :

O bless'd times, which now no more  
Exposed to chance or change remain ;  
Which having been, no after stain  
Can dim the brightness that ye wore ;

Dark shadows of approaching ill  
Fall thick upon life's forward track ;  
But on its past they stream not back,  
What once was bright abides so still.

---

---

THAT name ! how often every day  
We spake it and we heard ;  
It was to us, 'mid tasks or play,  
A common household word.

'Tis breath'd yet, that name—but oh !  
How solemn now the sound !  
One of the sanctities which throw  
Such awe our homes around

TO ———

CHILD of my spiritual love !—others I claim,  
Nor are they not unto my spirit near,  
While they, too, bear for me this holy name,  
And by its right are dear :  
And yet they do not stir for me, as thou  
Stirrest the fountains of my bosom now.

For memory guardeth yet,  
And will in holiest places guard the hour,  
When first beside that hallowed font we met,  
And on thy brow the sacred seal was set,  
And given the robe of power.

Beneath my feet he lay,—  
His little mouldering clay,  
So lately to the heartless earth consigned,  
Even his, for ever dear, the first who came  
To bid me know what meant a father's name,  
With a child's love about my heart to wind.

And all around me did a frequent band  
Of newer mourners stand :  
For thou, unconscious child, hast yet to learn  
That it was at thy birth  
As if a star had quitted earth,  
Thee clothing in its radiance mild,  
And in a splendour undefiled,  
But never more in our dim air to burn.



Oh then, dear child, be thou for ever strong,  
As one who for these costliest issues came  
Into this world, as one to whom belong  
The glory and the burden of a name,  
Thy sire's and grandsire's ;—ample be thy dower !  
And all thy life the unfolding, hour by hour,  
Of what was at that font made thine of grace and power.

---

MANY times the morning laughs in light  
Underneath a cloudless ether bright ;

And 'tis little thought what weeping dews  
And thick rains fell heavy all the night.

Many times a cheerful mien is worn,  
And men say, All tears are staunch'd quite,

Little guessing what has been erewhile  
In the lonely chambers out of sight.

---

HALF unbelieving doth my heart remain  
Of its great woe ;  
I waken, and a dull dead sense of pain  
Is all I know.

Then dimly in the darkness of my mind  
I feel about,  
To know what 'tis that troubles me, and find  
My sorrow out,

And hardly with long pains my heart I bring  
Its loss to own :  
Still seems it so impossible a thing  
That thou art gone—

That not in all my life I ever more  
With pleas'd ear  
Thy quick light feet advancing to my door  
Again shall hear—

That thou not ever with inquiring looks  
Or subtle talk  
Shalt bring to me sweet hindrance 'mid my books  
Or studious walk—

That, whatsoever else of good for me  
In store remain,  
This lieth out of hope, my child, to see  
Thy face again.

*SONNET.*

WHEN I consider what our life hath been,  
How full of devious error, far astray  
From paths of truth and that one only way,  
And by what mercies, strange and unforeseen,  
We have been brought unto the port serene  
Of faith, which many missing never may  
Reach the one haven of their rest,—I say,  
Dulling the edge of sorrow, else too keen,—  
How shall we make untimely moan for them,  
How shall we mourn beside their early grave,  
Who being washed in baptism's holy wave  
From that first taint which doth us all condemn,  
Passed from this evil world, and never aught  
Of our life's darker stains from hence have caught ?

---

WHERE thou hast touched, O wondrous Death !  
Where thou hast come between,  
Lo ! there for ever perisheth  
The common and the mean.

No little flaw, or trivial speck  
Doth any more appear,  
And cannot from this time, to fleck  
Love's perfect image clear.

Clear stands Love's perfect image now,  
And shall do evermore ;  
And we in awe and wonder bow  
The glorified before.

---

---

WHEN its higher faith this heart denies,  
Bare and open to the world's glare lies,

Presently, ye bless'd ones, ye seem  
Turning hither sad reproachful eyes ;

Gaze ye then on this unholy heart  
With a solemn and a sad surprise.

‘ When we left you,’ so the voices come,  
‘ When the last light faded from our eyes,

When the last farewells found hardly way,  
Hardly spoken amid sobs and sighs,

Was not this our trust in death, that ye  
Would to God be faithful anyway,

That one love to Him would link us yet,  
You on earth, and us in Paradise ?’

—O ye bless'd voices of rebuke,  
When ye reach me, straightway I arise ;

And exclaim I, bidding to depart  
The world's flatteries, and lures, and lies,

‘ Grant us ever to keep faith with Thee,  
Lord, and with our saints in Paradise.

---

‘WHAT pang is permanent with man? From the highest  
As from the meanest thing of every day,  
He learns to wean himself : for the strong hours  
Conquer him.’—SCHILLER.

WHO that a watcher doth remain  
Beside a couch of mortal pain,  
Deems he can ever smile again?

Or who that weeps beside a bier  
Counts he has any more to fear  
From the world’s flatteries, false and leer?

And yet anon and he must start  
At the light toys in which his heart  
Can now already claim its part.

O hearts of ours ! so weak and poor,  
That nothing there can long endure ;  
And so their hurts find shameful cure,

While every sadder, wiser thought,  
Each holier aim which sorrow brought,  
Fades quite away and comes to nought.

O Thou, who dost our weakness know,  
Watch for us, that the strong hours so  
Not wean us from our wholesome woe.

Grant Thou, that we may long retain  
The wholesome memories of pain,  
Nor wish to lose them soon again.

---

Christmas, 1841.

I F our high debt of holy glee  
This day we have not fully paid,  
If other thoughts have dared invade  
The time, yet pardoned this shall be :

For these, how should they not have flung  
Some shadow on this day perforce,  
When away through its solemn course  
One presence has about us hung?

Even his, who with us still abode,  
When last our yule-fires burned, although  
Even then already girt to go,  
Young pilgrim for so rough a road?

The image of his pale meek face,  
As he, though full of silent pain,  
Among the household band was fain  
This festal eve to keep his place :

In weakness and in pain he lay,  
In heavier pain than then we knew,  
While yet the coming anguish threw  
No shadow on our forward way.

Near was it, yet we little deemed  
One step would bring us into gloom,  
Another set us by a tomb,  
But all secure and constant seemed.

Now, living o'er that time anew,  
Sad are we—yet, I would believe,  
Not thus unfitted to receive  
Our share in this day's blessings true :

For He who once, a Heavenly Child,  
Came to a world not clad in bright  
Spring-blossoms, nor in gay leaves dight,  
But to its winter bleak and wild,

To faithful hearts comes evermore,  
When Grief has touched with finger sere  
The splendours of life's earlier year,  
As never He had come before.

### THE LENT JEWELS.

A JEWISH APOLOGUE.

IN schools of wisdom all the day was spent :  
His steps at eve the Rabbi homeward bent,  
With homeward thoughts, which dwelt upon the wife  
And two fair children who consoled his life.  
She, meeting at the threshold, led him in,  
And with these words preventing, did begin :  
' I, greeting ever your desired return,  
Yet greet it most to-day ; for since this morn  
I have been much perplexed and sorely tried  
Upon one point, which you must now decide.  
Some years ago, a friend into my care  
Some jewels gave, rich precious gems they were ;  
But having given them in my charge, this friend  
Did afterwards nor come for them, nor send,  
But in my keeping suffered them for long,  
Till now it almost seems to me a wrong

That he should suddenly arrive to-day,  
To take those jewels, which he left, away.  
What think you? Shall I freely yield them back,  
And with no murmuring?—so henceforth to lack  
Those gems myself, which I had learned to see  
Almost as mine for ever, mine in fee.'

'What question can be here? your own true heart  
Must needs advise you of the only part;  
That may be claimed again which was but lent,  
And should be yielded with no discontent;  
Nor surely can we find in this a wrong,  
That it was left us to enjoy it long.'

'Good is the word,' she answered; 'may we now  
And evermore that it is good allow!'  
And, rising, to an inner chamber led,  
And there she showed him, stretched upon one bed,  
Two children pale, and he the jewels knew,  
Which God had lent him, and resumed anew.

---

---

O LIFE, O death, O world, O time,  
O grave, where all things flow,  
'Tis yours to make our lot sublime  
With your great weight of woe.

Though sharpest anguish hearts may wring,  
Though bosoms torn may be,  
Yet suffering is a holy thing;  
Without it what were we?



*FROM THE ARABIC.*

DESPAIR not in the vale of woe,  
Where many joys from suffering flow.

Oft breathes simoom, and close behind  
A breath of God doth softly blow.

Clouds threaten, but a ray of light,  
And not of lightning, falls below.

How many winters o'er thy head  
Have passed ; yet bald it does not show.

Thy branches are not bare, and yet  
What storms have shook them to and fro.

To thee has Time brought many joys,  
If many it has bid to go ;

And seasoned has with bitterness  
Thy cup, that flat it should not grow.

Trust in that veiled hand, which leads  
None by the path that he would go ;

And always be for change prepared,  
For the world's law is ebb and flow.

Stand fast in suffering, until He  
Who called it, shall dismiss also ;

And from that Lord all good expect,  
Who many mercies strews below ;

Who in life's narrow garden-strip  
Has bid delights unnumbered blow.

*ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.*

'MID sterner losses let us own one gain—  
An infant this will evermore remain :  
Those other, should they reach life's longer date,  
In them the coming will obliterate  
The past ; and we shall what they were forget,  
Our eyes upon their later semblance set ;  
But this remaineth an eternal child.  
Might sorrow for a little be beguiled  
Even with this thought a soothing fancy brings !  
Her image has escaped the flux of things,  
And that same infant beauty which she wore  
Is fixed upon her now for evermore—  
The everlasting garment fresh and new  
Which in our eyes will ever her endue ;  
Which she will not put off, as the others must,  
For garments soiled more with this world's dust :  
As though a bud should be a bud for ever,  
A crystal rill ne'er swell to turbid river ;  
As though on aught most fleeting and most fair,  
On roseate tints which clouds of evening wear,  
We might lay hands, and fix them ever there.

*A JEWISH APOLOGUE.*

UP and down his gardens paced a King,  
In the glorious season of the spring.

Lovely flowrets there by him were seen  
In their earliest bud and blossoming.

How should he those lovely flowrets pull,  
Half whose glory lay a hidden thing?

When a few short days were gone, again  
Visited his garden-plots the King:

And those flowers, so dewy, fresh, and fair,  
Brighter than the brightest insect's wing,

Each was hanging now a drooping head,  
Each lay now a wan discoloured thing;

And he thought, Their scent and sweetness I  
Had rejoiced in, earlier gathering.

So when in his gardens of delight  
Did that Monarch pace another spring,

And the folded buds again admired,  
That did round them fragrant odour fling,

He with timely hand prevented now  
The sad season of their withering,

Culled them in the glory of their prime,  
Ere their fresh delight had taken wing,

Culled the young and beautiful, and laid  
In his bosom gently, home to bring.

*ON REVISITING THE SEINE.*

YE are the same, ye meadows and green banks  
And pastures level to the river's edge ;  
Ye shores with' poplar fringed in graceful ranks,  
And towns that nestle under rocky ledge ;

Ye island-spots of greenery, fast embraced  
By the dividing arms of this fair stream,  
Which, parting for a moment, meet in haste,  
And then in breadths of lake-like beauty gleam.

The quiet cattle, feeding quietly,  
They seem the very same I saw of yore ;  
And the same picture lives upon mine eye,  
Methinks, that lived upon mine eye before.

Fair were ye, seen of old ; ye now are fair,  
As ye were then : and not a change appears,  
Unless that all doth stranger beauty wear,  
This time beholden through a mist of tears.

For oh ! ye streams, ye meadows, and ye hills,  
To which there cometh no mutation nigh,  
Dim trouble at your sight my bosom fills,  
You looking at me with this changeless eye.

It troubles me that ye, unfeeling things,  
Should be exempted from our tears and fears,  
While we—the lords of nature and its kings—  
Servile remain to all the changeful years.

On this swift-sliding stream I sail once more,  
Whose beauty brings unutterable pain ;  
For ye who saw with me this sight before,  
Three were ye—but, oh ! where are now the twain ?

Ye are not here—the floods, the hills are here  
They look on me with their unaltered eye ;  
Dowered with a strength eternal they appear,  
And we like weak wan phantoms flitting by.

---

THIS winter eve how soft ! how mild !  
How calm the earth ! how calm the sea !  
The earth is like a weary child,  
And ocean chants its lullaby.

A little murmur in mine ear !  
A little ripple at my feet !  
They only make the silence here,  
Which they disturb not, more complete.

I wander on the sands apart ;  
I watch the sun, world-wearied, sink  
Into his grave :—with tranquil heart  
Upon the loved and lost I think.

TO ———

DEAR sister, that hast wandered forth with me,  
From patient vigils needed now no more,  
A watcher most unwillingly set free  
From love's long service, which at last is o'er,—

From chambers, where the candles of the night  
Far into day, unquenched, unheeded, burn,  
While unregarded comes the dreary light,  
The unnoted breaking of the dreary morn—

Who hast come forth to let the breeze of May  
Blow on thy cheek amid another scene,  
Fair sights have we beholden day by day,  
While on this Norman soil our feet have been.

'Mid clustering shafts and pinnacles and towers  
Of many a tall cathedral have we stood,  
Have sailed up lovely streams for pleasant hours,  
And there and here have found our spirits' food.

Yet still this thought would in our hearts arise,  
When aught of rarer beauty met our sight,  
This thought of sadness,—*they* are shut, those eyes  
To which this vision had brought keen delight ;

To which all lovely things were welcome still,  
As footprints of a Beauty, whither turned  
Her spirit alway ; and of which her fill  
To drink for ever, fervently she yearned.

This was our grief ; be it our joy as well,—  
That they are closed and she no longer sees  
Our glimpses faint which of that Beauty tell,  
To open on the eternal fount of these.

---

O FRIEND, it seems when first our lives begin,  
When we, fresh mariners, first hoist the sail,  
On favouring seas by favouring breezes borne,  
As though the bark of our felicity  
Could never be ornately trimmed enough,  
Nor be enough full-freighted with delights ;  
As though each thing we wanted were a wrong  
Done to us ;— so we loosen from the land.  
But what another lesson will anon  
Be learn'd, and of them who claimed so much,  
Deeming it all too little for their needs,  
Some will be thankful if one broken plank  
Of all their tempest-shattered bark remain,  
Bearing them up above the salt-sea foam  
Of this world's infelicity to shore.

But that dream vanishing, other dreams succeed ;  
And when upon the shoals or rocks of life  
Some shipwreck we have suffered, we would bide,  
Singing sad dirges o'er our sunken wealth  
For ever. Oh, but life is strong ! and still  
Bears with its currents onward us who fain  
Would linger where our treasures have gone down,  
Though but to mark the ripple on the wave,  
The small disturbing eddies that betray  
The place of shipwreck : life is strong, and still  
Bears onward to new tasks and sorrows new,  
Whether we will or no.

Life bears us on,  
And yet not so, but that there may survive  
Something to us ; sweet odours reach us yet,  
Brought sweetly from the fields long left behind

Of holy joy, or sorrow holier still :  
As I remember when, long years ago,  
With the companions of my youth, I rode  
'Mid Sicily's holm oaks and pastoral dells  
All in the flowery spring, through fields of thyme,  
Fields of all flowers,—no lovelier Enna knew,—  
There came to us long after, blown from these,  
Rich odours that pursued us many a mile,  
Embalming all the air :—so rode we on,  
Though we had changed our verdant meadow-paths  
For steep rough tracks up dusty river-beds,  
Yet haunted by that odorous fragrance still.

Then let us be content in spirit, though  
We cannot walk, as we are fain to do,  
Within the solemn shadow of our griefs  
For ever ; but must needs come down again  
From the bright skirts of those protecting clouds,  
To tread the common paths of earth anew.  
Then let us be content to leave behind us  
So much ; which yet we leave not quite behind ;  
For the bright memories of the holy dead,  
The bless'd ones departed, shine on us  
Like the pure splendours of some clear large star,  
Which pilgrims, travelling onward, at their backs  
Leave, and at every moment see not now ;  
Yet, whensoever they list, may pause and turn,  
And with its glories gild their faces still :  
Or as beneath a northern sky is seen  
The sunken sunset glowing in the west,  
A tender radiance there surviving long,  
Which has not faded all away, before  
The flaming banners of the morn advance  
Over the summits of the orient hills.



## N O T E S.

### Page 11. *The Monk and Bird.*

MORE than one German poet has dealt with this legend. Thus see in Wolff's *Poet. Hausschatz*, p. 387.

### Page 41. *An Evening in France.*

See S. Augustine, *Confessions*, ix. 10.

### Page 135. *Retribution.*

I sent to Frederick Rückert a little volume containing translations from some of his poems, and also these verses. I print his reply :—

‘Hochgeehrter Herr,—Ich danke Ihnen für die Uebersendung Ihres Büchleins, das mir eine ungemeine Freude gemacht hat, durch seinen so reichen sittlichen Gehalt in so schönen dichterischen Formen, so wie durch die liebevolle Nachbildung einiger Stücke von mir. Ich wünsche mir Glück zu einem solchen Vermittler für meine Dichtungen bei Ihren edlen Landsleuten, die nunmehr auch nach uns sich umsehen wie wir so lange schon nach ihnen. Das fabrikmässige Uebersetzen von Dichterwerken, wie es unter uns betrieben wird, liebe ich nicht, ja halte es für verderblich ; aber eine solche freie und innige, gegenseitige Aneignung ist erfreulich und erspriesslich. Auch von Ihren Versen haben mich manche zur Nachbildung angereizt, doch bis jetzt habe ich nur “Retribution,” S. 133, für mein Tagebuch so in Trimeter zusammengefasst :

“Gerechter Himmel, der du dies geordnet hast ;  
Wer Freude sucht als eignes Ziel verfehlt sie nur ;  
Wer im Berufe wandelt von der Pflicht geführt,  
Die Freude findet er überall am Wege blühn.”

Nun hoffe ich auch einigen meiner hiesigen Bekannten, die mit Vorliebe das Englische lesen, durch Mittheilung Ihres Werkes einen Genuss zu bereiten.

‘Ihr ergebenster,

‘Erlangen, d. 19. Juni 1840.’

‘FRIEDR. RÜCKERT’

Page 193. *The Steadfast Prince.*

The subject and name of this poem were suggested by Calderon's noble drama, *El Principe Constante*, admirably translated into German by Schlegel. But I owe much more to a *Life of the Prince*, Berlin, 1827, which gives many original documents connected with the unfortunate expedition to Africa, and details of the captivity, sufferings, and death of the Prince;—a little volume which well exemplifies how far richer and deeper will oftentimes be the simple truth than any fiction; since all that even so great a poet as Calderon has imagined to shed a glory round his Christian hero is weak and poor, compared with the simple reality. This prince was on one side English, his mother, Philippa, who married John the First of Portugal, being sister to our fourth Henry.

Page 217. *Orpheus and the Sirens.*

'Orpheus laudes Deorum cantans et reboans, Sirenium voces confudit et summovit: meditationes enim rerum divinarum voluptates sensus non tantum potestate, sed etiam suavitate superant.'—Lord Bacon, *Sapientia Veterum*.

Page 220. *Let us turn hitherward our bark, they cried.*

Mr. Holden has done me the honour to include more than one translation from this poem in his *Folia Silvulae*, pp. 342, 343. This is from his own pen.

Huc feriantes ibimus, ibimus,  
 Ridens amœnum quo vocat insula,  
     Paulisper obliti laboris  
     Præteriti simul ac futuri;  
 Et mox refecti corpora obibimus  
 Rursus laborem, si superest labor,  
     Rursusque pectemus marinam  
     Præpete canitiem carinâ?  
 Quo dia proles tenditis, immemor  
 Famæ prioris, sanguinis immemor?  
     Quid voltis? at quondam pigebit  
     Degeneres maculasse nomen.  
 Blandis sed illi vocibus illicum  
 Iam iamque prensant litora creduli;  
     Fractis nec advertere fœdam  
     Undique navigiis harenam,  
 Aut visa nullos incutiunt metus:  
 Neque usta ventis, usta caloribus,  
     Quis omnis albescebat ora  
     Ossa monent revocare gressum.

Page 230. *The Oil of Mercy.*

The traditions of a relation between the Tree of Life which was set in Paradise, and the Cross on which hung the Saviour of the world, are almost infinite ; or, rather, the one deep idea of their identity has clothed itself in innumerable forms. They constitute one of the richest portions of what may perhaps, without offence, be termed the mythology of the Christian Church. That which I have followed here is given in the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, c. 19 (Thilo, *Codex Apocryphus*, vol. i. p. 684). They have been twice wrought up into sublime dramatic poems by Calderon ; once in his *Auto, El Arbol del mejor Fruto* ; and again in that which is indeed only the same poem in a later and more perfect form, *La Sibila del Oriente*. We have the same tradition of Seth going to the gates of Paradise in the fine old Cornish Mystery, *The Creation of the World*, and references to it are frequent in the popular literature of the middle ages ; see, for instance, Goethe's recension of the *Reineke Fuchs*, the tenth book ; and Mandeville's *Travels*. Rückert (see p. 236) gives the tradition in somewhat a different shape.

This poem, which owes much to Calderon, is written in Spanish *assonants*, in which words are considered to rhyme which have the same vowel-sounds, though the consonants are different ; thus *angel* and *raiment*, having the same vowel-sounds, *a—e*, are perfect assonant rhymes. As in the Persian Ghazel, one rhyme runs through the whole poem, in which all the alternate lines, beginning with the second, terminate ; and of course the rhythmical effect must be judged, not by any half-dozen lines apart, but by the total impression which the poem continuously read leaves on the ear.

Page 244. *Mooltan.*

'A company of Moolraj's Muzubees, or outcasts turned Sikhs, led on the mob. It was an appalling sight ; and Sirdar Khan Sing begged of Mr. Agnew to be allowed to wave a sheet, and sue for mercy. Weak in body from loss of blood, Agnew's heart failed him not. He replied, "The time for mercy is gone ; let none be asked for. They can kill us two if they like, but we are not the last of the English ; *thousands of Englishmen will come down here when we are gone, and annihilate Moolraj, and his soldiers, and his fort !*" The crowd now rushed in with horrible shouts ; made Khan Sing prisoner, and pushing aside the servants with the butts of their muskets, surrounded the two wounded officers. Lieutenant Anderson, from the first, had been too much wounded even to move ; and now Mr. Agnew was sitting by his bedside, holding his hand, and talking in English. Doubtless, they were bidding each other farewell for all time. . . . Anderson was hacked to death with swords, and afterwards the two bodies were dragged outside, and slashed and insulted by the crowd, then left all night under the sky.'—EDWARDES, *Year on the Punjab Frontier*, vol. ii. p. 58.

'The besieging army did not march away to other fields without perform-

ing its last melancholy duty to the memory of Agnew and Anderson. The bodies of those officers were carefully—I may say affectionately—removed from the careless grave where they lay side by side; and, wrapped in Cashmere shawls, (with a vain but natural desire to obliterate all traces of neglect,) were borne by the soldiers of the 1st Bombay Fusiliers (Anderson's own regiment) to an honoured resting-place on the summit of Moolraj's citadel. By what way borne? Through the gate where they had been first assaulted? Oh, no! through the broad and sloping breach, which had been made by the British guns in the walls of the rebellious fortress of Mooltan.—*The Same*, p. 588.

Page 263. *The Etrurian King.*

See Mrs. Hamilton Gray's *Sepulchres of Etruria*.

Page 267. POEMS FROM EASTERN SOURCES.

These Poems bear somewhat a vague title, because such only would accurately suit compositions derived in very different degrees from the sources thus indicated. Some are mere translations; others have been modelled anew, and only such portions used of the originals as were adapted to my purpose; of others it is only the imagery and thought which are Eastern, and these have been put together in new combinations; while of others it is the hint, and nothing more, which has been borrowed,—it may be from some prose source.

Page 267. *Alexander at the Gates of Paradise.*

See Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judenthum*, vol. ii. p. 321, with whose judgment I cannot agree, for he has scarcely patience to finish this 'narrische talmudische Fabel,' as he styles it. It reappears, slightly modified, in the Persian tradition that Alexander, having conquered the world, determined to seek out the fountain of life and immortality. So in the Christian poems of the Middle Ages, he recognizes at last the emptiness of all the glory which he has won, and is hardly turned from his purpose of going forth in search of the lost Paradise (Rosenkranz, *Gesch. d. deutschen Poesie im Mittelalter*, p. 367). Chamisso has treated the same legend, from whom I have derived several hints.

Page 272. *Chidher's Well.*

Of Chidher's Well, the Eastern λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας, Von Hammer, in the very interesting introduction to his *History of Persian Poetry*, gives this account: 'Contemporary with Moses lived the Prophet Chiser, of

whom some hold that he is the same with Elias, while others altogether distinguish them. He is one of the chief personages of Eastern mythology, the ever-ready helper of the oppressed, the Genius of spring, the deliverer in peril, the admonisher of princes, the avenger of unrighteousness, the guide through the wilderness of the world, and, finally, the ever-youthful guardian of the fountain of life. As such he revives the youth of men and beasts and plants, gives back lost beauty, and in spring arrays the dead earth with its fresh garments of green. His fountain bestows on whomsoever drinks it eternal beauty, youth, and wisdom. What wonder then that all mortals with burning desire seek it, though as yet not one, not even Alexander, the conqueror of the world, who, in quest of it, undertook an expedition into the land of darkness, has found it! Probably this, his journey through the land of darkness, is but a mythic form of his expedition through the Libyan desert to the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

### Page 279. *The Breaker of Idols.*

Mahmoud, the great Mahomedan conqueror of India, reached, in his career of victory, Somnât, of which the gates have since become familiar to us—a temple of peculiar sanctity in the southern extremity of Guzerât. Having overcome all resistance, he entered the temple. 'Facing the entrance was Somnât—an idol five yards high, of which two were buried in the ground. Mahmoud instantly ordered the image to be destroyed: when the Bramins of the temple threw themselves before him, and offered an enormous ransom if he would spare their deity. . . . Mahmoud, after a moment's pause, declared that he would rather be remembered as the breaker than the seller of idols, and struck the image with his mace. His example was instantaneously followed, and the image, which was hollow, burst with the blows, and poured forth a quantity of diamonds and other jewels which amply repaid Mahmoud for the sacrifice of the ransom.'—Elphinstone, *History of India*, vol. i. p. 554. There is a later poem on the same subject by Lowell, *Under the Willows*, p. 135.

### Page 283. *The Banished Kings.*

See Rückert, *Brahmanische Erzählungen*, p. 5; on the model of whose poem, my own, without pretending to be an accurate translation, is closely formed. The apologue owns, I believe, a higher antiquity even than the beautiful Greek romance of the seventh or eighth century, *Barlaam and Josaphat*, often ascribed, though on no sufficient grounds, to John of Damascus; but, at any rate, it is one of the many exquisite apologues with which that work is adorned.

### Page 289. *The Barmecides.*

See Sylvestre de Sacy, *Chrestomathie Arabe*, vol. ii.; and D'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, s. v. Barmekian.

Page 294. *The Festival.*

See Sylvestre de Sacy, *Chrestomathie Arabe*, vol. ii. p. 3.

Page 299. *The Eastern Narcissus.*

In the attempt of the Neo-Platonists to put a new life into the old Grecian mythology, Narcissus falling in love with his own image in the water-brook was made the symbol of man casting himself forth into the world of shows and appearances, and expecting to find the good that would answer to his nature there, but indeed finding nothing but disappointment and death.—The fable is Feridoddin Attar's, who, born in 1216, perished in the invasion of Dschengischan. He was originally a rich merchant of spices. A pious dervisch entered his warehouse one day and craved an alms. Ferid bade him to be gone. The dervisch answered, 'That can I do easily, for I possess nothing save my hood; but thou, with so many heavy sacks, how wilt thou contrive to be gone, when the hour of thy departure has arrived?' These words made so deep an impression on Ferid, that, from that moment, he gave up his worldly strivings, and dedicated himself to the spiritual life.

Page 306. *Moses and Jethro.*

See Tholuck, *Blüthensammlung aus der morgenländischen Mystik*, p. 128.

Page 312. *Harmosan.*

See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, c. 51.

Page 314. *Life through Death.*

See Tholuck, *Blüthensammlung aus der morgenländischen Mystik*, p. 69.

*Ibid.* l. 12.

*Like Jesus' breath of balm 'tis cool and sweet.*

The Mahomedans believe that in the *breath* of Christ lay the healing virtue, by which his miraculous cures were effected.

*Ibid.* l. 17.

*Come, Abraham's secret, when he found alone  
Sweet roses in the furnace, here is known.*

It is a tradition alike Jewish and Mahomedan, that Abraham was flung into a furnace by Nimrod, for refusing to worship his false gods; whereupon the flames, instead of scorching and consuming, were turned for him into a bed of jasmine and roses.

Page 316. *The World.*

See Von Hammer, *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens*, p. 236.

Page 317. *The Suppliant.*

See Tholuck, *Blüthensammlung aus der morgenländischen Mystik*, p. 84.

Page 319. *The Monk and Sinner.*

See the same, p. 251. All must be struck with the deep moral resemblance which this story of Saadi's bears to the incident recorded by St. Luke, vii. 36—40. We have here reproduced to us the Pharisee and the woman that was a sinner, and all the deeper relations of law and grace which belong to that history.

Page 324. *The Pantheist.*

See the same, p. 255, and his *Sufismus*, pp. 133—145. The doctrine of evil, as not indeed evil, but only an inferior kind of good, to which the pantheist is of necessity driven, is wrought out with great skill and frequency by the Eastern Mystics—often comes out in their writings in its most offensive shapes. It is instructive to notice how completely they have anticipated this view, which continually reappears in the philosophical systems of our own day, and is in them brought forward as some mighty discovery, and a key to all the perplexities of the world.

Page 326. *The Righteous of the World.*

See Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judenthum*, s. v. p. 362.

Page 332. *The Conversion of Abraham.*

See D'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, s. v. Abraham.

Page 333. *The True Pilgrim.*

The deeper religious minds of Mahomedanism spiritualize the pilgrimage to Mecca, and do not fail to urge that the performance of its outward details of duty will profit nothing, unless regarded as signs and symbols of higher truths. See in proof the *Abu Seid* of Hariri (Rückert's translation, vol. ii.

pp. 36—46), a book equal in wit, and in many higher qualities immeasurably superior, to *Gil Blas*, the European work with which it naturally suggests a comparison.

Page 333, l. 15.

*Circling the sacred shrine in many a ring.*

The Caaba, the aim and object to which the pilgrimage is properly directed, is a plain unpretending edifice. The Loretto of Mahomedanism having Seth for its builder, it was at the deluge carried by angels into heaven; and when that was past, brought back to earth. The reverence attached to it dates back to a period far anterior to the rise of Islam. The new religion adopted it with so much else into itself.

*Ibid.* l. 16.

*And duly drank of Zemsen's holy spring.*

The holy well at Mecca, from which no pilgrim omits to draw water and to drink. It is said to be the same which sprang up in the wilderness for Hagar and her child.

*Ibid.* l. 18.

*Doth now coalblack through breath of sinners show*

This stone, also a legacy from Arabian heathenism to 'the Faith,' is fixed at about a man's height in the outer wall of the Caaba, and is duly kissed by every pilgrim. Snow-white when it fell from heaven, it has from the breath of sinners become perfectly black.





